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THE MODERN CHURCHMAN

By identifying the new learning with heresy, you make orthodoxy synonymous with ignorance.—*Erasmus.*

EDITOR: H. D. A. MAJOR, D.D., F.S.A.

CONTENTS:

	PAGE
Signs of the Times:	
Amsterdam and Nicaea	81
Lambeth and the Ordination of Women	82
Schweitzer and Religious Freedom	84
Prayer in an Atomic Age	85
Christianity and Churchianity	86
Church Finance and Lay Control	87
The Fourth Centenary of the Prayer Book	88
One Easter or Two?	90
The Arch-Schismatic	92
In Memoriam: G. L. H. Harvey	93
English Modernism: Its Principles and Prospects. W. R. Inge	96
The Future of the Modernist Movement Sir Henry Self, K.C.B.	105
Anglicanism in Australian Life. Kenneth Henderson	113
The Christian Gospel and Chinese Civilization. F. S. Drake	117
The Historical Element in Christianity. S. G. F. Brandon, D.D.	124
Loisy's *La Naissance du Christianisme.* The Editor	132
Book Reviews:	
A Robust Superstition	137
The London Syllabus of Religious Education	138
God, Man and the Absolute	141
Religious Reminiscences of a Journalist	143
The Christian Answer	145
Anglican Orthodoxy	147
Man in Eastern Religions	147
Correspondence	150—152

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THE HIBBERT JOURNAL

A Quarterly Review of Religion, Theology and Philosophy

Edited by **G. STEPHENS SPINKS**

Contents for July 1948

THE CRISIS FOR *HOMO SAPIENS*	The Earl of Darnley
THE ORIGINS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT	Alfred Loisy
M. LOISY AND *THE HIBBERT JOURNAL*	The Editor
THE SINGLE ONE AND THE OTHER	Constance I. Smith
THE LIVING FULLNESS OF LIFE	Professor H. Bompas Smith
DOOM OR DEVELOPMENT?	Dr. Richard K. Ullmann
THE NEW APOCALYPTIC	John S. Hoyland
RICHARD BAXTER AND THE PROBLEM OF CERTAINTY	Dr. Margaret L. Wiley
CHURCH STATISTICS FOR ENGLAND	R. D. Macleod
H. G. WELLS, MATERIALIST AND MYSTIC	Sidney Spencer

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THE
MODERN CHURCHMAN

By identifying the new learning with heresy, you make orthodoxy synonymous with ignorance.—*Erasmus.*

A State without the means of change is without the means of its conservation.—*Edmund Burke.*

No. 2 JUNE Vol. XXXVIII

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Amsterdam and Nicaea

After the Lambeth Conference which concludes its sessions at the end of July, at which as many as possible of the Bishops of the Anglican communion will be present, another great ecclesiastical gathering will take place at Amsterdam in August, when the World Council of Churches will meet. Here representatives of all the Christian communions confederated in the Oecumenical Movement will assemble. From this gathering the Roman Catholics and the Christian Scientists exclude themselves, and the Unitarians are excluded.

This deliberate exclusion of Unitarians is rightly deprecated by Liberal Churchmen. The motto of Manchester College, Oxford, the chief centre of Unitarian ministerial education in this country, is *Veritas*, *Libertas*, *Pietas*: among its heads have been the saintly Christian scholars James Martineau, James Drummond and Estlin Carpenter. The ground for the exclusion of the Unitarians is their alleged denial of the Incarnation. We doubt whether this charge is valid to-day, or whether modern Unitarian ministers would deny the truth of the Incarnation as it is expressed in the prologue of the Fourth Gospel. The policy of excluding the Unitarians from the Amsterdam Conference has led to most unfortunate results, as the Rev. T. J. Wood shows in a letter to the *Church Times* of May 7th:

> 'You refer to the World Council of Churches. That Council has come into existence on the basis of comprehensiveness, and it is interesting to note that directly it endeavours to enforce doctrinal uniformity it fails lamentably. It has adopted the formula "Jesus Christ as God and Saviour" as the test of membership. It admits that "Theologically speaking the basis is probably not the best that could be found." Why then adopt it? Unity is desirable, but is it right to wait so many centuries for a World Council of Churches, and then to inaugurate it on the basis of a new and bad theological formula? The formula is indeed a compound

of all the heresies, for it not only ignores God the Father and God the Holy Spirit, but denies the Incarnation by eliminating all reference to the human nature of Christ. The formula was, I am given to understand, put forward by Dr. Manning at the General Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States in 1910, and its form was determined by the desire to exclude the Unitarians. It is to be hoped that when the World Council does come into being it will do so on a doctrinal basis of greater historical authority.'

We heartily agree with Mr. Wood's proposal that the World Council should secure a new formula which is neither heretical nor defective. We believe that all modern educated Unitarian ministers would affirm the following formula selected from the prologue of the Fourth Gospel :

'We believe that in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God ;

'that the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth ;

'that as many as received him, to them gave he the right to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.'

As students of the Greek Testament know, there is a distinction here between the term 'God' when used of the divine Father and when used of the divine Son. In the former case, the word God — *theos* — has the definite article, but the term 'God' when applied to the divine Son is anarthrous, thus indicating that He is the possessor of the divine nature of the divine Father but is not a second deity. This usage is retained in our orthodox creeds. If both Trinitarians and Unitarians realized the significance and implications of this distinction there would be every prospect of their achieving a higher synthesis theologically, and it would be well worth while for the coming Amsterdam Conference to effect this as well as a number of other unifying measures. As a step towards this desirable consummation, all who profess and call themselves Christians ought to be free to be represented at the World Council of Churches without submitting to a dogmatic formula.

Lambeth and the Ordination of Women

There is a growing apprehension that the Lambeth Conference may avoid pronouncing on the validity of the ordination of women or, influenced by the practice of the Roman Catholic Church, may pronounce against the admission of women to the priesthood. This apprehension finds expression in the following petition addressed to the Primate as Chairman of the Lambeth Conference :

'We, the undersigned members of the Church of England, respectfully beg Your Grace and the Bishops assembled at the Lambeth Conference to give full consideration to the proposed Canon on the ordination of

women to the priesthood which has been referred to the Conference by the General Synod of the Church in China. We beg, further, that a favourable reply may be given to the question which accompanies it: " . . . whether or not such liberty to experiment within the framework of the Anglican Communion would be in accordance with Anglican tradition and order?"'

The resolution which the Church in China (*i.e.* the Chinese Anglican Communion) has referred to the Lambeth Conference runs as follows:

'Whereas this Synod having received from the Diocese of South China the following proposal for a new Canon of the C.H.S.K.H.; viz., For a period of 20 years only from the adoption of this Canon by General Synod, a deaconess may be ordained to the priesthood, provided that:—

(1) She has the same theological, spiritual, and pastoral qualifications as are required of a deacon before ordination to the priesthood.

(2) She is full 30 years old and unmarried, and intends to remain unmarried, and undertakes, should she later find herself called to the vocation of marriage, to return her licence to the Bishop.

'This Canon lapses unless re-enacted at the expiration of 20 years from its adoption by General Synod, though women ordained under it shall continue their ministry for the rest of their life-time.'

This proposed experiment is surely one which must commend itself to the great majority of our Anglican episcopate at home and overseas, for it recognizes the spiritual and moral equality of men and women—'in Christ there is neither male nor female'—but makes the practical recognition of this equality by the admission of women to the priesthood dependent upon its pastoral utility. There are many good Christian people who, affirming in the strongest form their conviction in the absolute spiritual and moral equality of the sexes, yet doubt whether the admission of women to the priesthood will serve the best interests of the Christian Church. It is only the freedom to experiment in this sphere which can secure a satisfactory decision. There seem to us to be church conditions in which women priests could be much more effective than men priests, and *vice versa*. Only experiment can decide, and the right to experiment ought to be frankly and freely granted by the Lambeth Conference in a spirit of ungrudging optimism.

The situation recently created in the Church of Denmark by the proposal to ordain three women to the ministry is significant. We rely on the *Church Times* of April 30th for the details of the case:

'The Danish Parliament recently passed a law permitting the bishops of the national Church to ordain women. A clause of the new law provides that should a bishop refuse to ordain a woman, the parish to which she is appointed may be transferred to another bishop who is willing to ordain her.

> 'One of the three women candidates for the ministry, Miss Anderson, has been appointed as pastor of the church of Norre Alsley. Dr. Plum, Bishop of Falster, refused to ordain her, but Dr. Ollgaard, Bishop of Funen, has declared that he is willing to do so. The parish of Norre Alsley is therefore to be placed under Dr. Ollgaard's jurisdiction.
>
> 'In reply to the protests of their clergy, the bishops maintain that no question of Church doctrine, but only a question of Church order is involved. Though they "deplore" the passing of the law, they maintain that the case of Miss Anderson is an exceptional one. They state that it is sufficient for the unity of the Church if agreement is maintained concerning the teaching of the Gospel and the administration of the sacraments.'

Faced by Disestablishment and Disruption — for there are some five hundred dissident pastors — the Danish bishops, compelled by *force majeure*, have made the right decision but in the wrong way.

Schweitzer and Religious Freedom

In this post-war period, when paper is severely rationed except in Government departments, a number of popular magazines have come into existence, small indeed in size but servants in a great cause — the cause of moral and spiritual truth and freedom. Foremost among them is *Faith and Freedom*.*

The contributions to the first number justify the claim of its editor that 'it represents no institution and supports no dogmatic position.' Its motto is that of John Milton: 'To be still searching for what we know not by what we know.' Its most valuable item in the first number is Albert Schweitzer's Declaration of Faith set forth in a letter to the International Association for Liberal Christianity and Religious Freedom:

> 'In this conference you will not forget that you are serving an unwanted object; unwanted because the spirit of to-day is opposed to free religious thinking. However, it is needed more than ever before, because for the spiritual life of our time it is a necessity. Only out of the renewal of ethical and religious thought can arise the spirit which gives to mankind the understanding and power to go from darkness and struggle into light and peace. Free Christianity has the great task of bringing to mankind once and for all the conviction that thought and religion are not irreconcilable but actually belong to each other. Every deep religion begets thinking and every truly deep thought becomes religious.
>
> 'The greatest human spirits have striven for the combination of thinking and religion because they saw this as a necessity for man's spiritual well-being. We continue this effort in a time when mankind must first of all learn again to respect spiritual truth. The heart of Christianity is, for us, the Kingdom of God. Only a Christianity which is inspired by this idea and is actively willing the Kingdom of God, is near the original Christianity; only this can give mankind what it needs.

*Published three times a year at the Priestley Hall, City Square, Leeds. Single number 1/-.

'By standing for free Christianity and not asking men to become religious by giving up the thinking which is part of their very nature, we have in Jesus one who denounces the laying on man, in the name of religion, heavy burdens which do not belong to it. We keep to the words of St. Paul: "Where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty."

'May our free Christianity show itself able in spirit and in deed to fulfil its task in our time; may our Religion become ever deeper and more real, so that the spirit of Jesus shall not only make us free, but deepen the reality of our Christian living. May this be our ideal.'

Prayer in an Atomic Age

The second issue of *Faith and Freedom* (February, 1948) contains an article on *Prayer and the World Crisis* by Dr. G. Stephen Spinks, successor to Dr. L. P. Jacks as editor of the *Hibbert Journal*. The intimacy of its religious self-revelation is arresting and relevant. Dr. Spinks writes:

'First: let us make it clear that Prayer is not just one more weapon among the many which are at this moment being pressed into the supposed interests of particular national securities. Prayer is not an air-raid precaution; nor is it a means of persuading the Hands of the Divine Compassion to stretch, somewhere in the stratosphere above this country, a kind of invisible net by which to catch projectiles malignantly released; it is not to be thought of as a prophylactic against artificially disseminated germs, nor yet as a spiritual vaccine capable of counteracting the effects of biological warfare. Prayers will not keep the waters sweet, nor the air swept of insidious diseases; they will not cause the sun to bring to fertility crops whose roots have been chemically poisoned. If the world falls under the Judgment of a Moral Nemesis the material consequences will not, I think, be averted by prayer. It is this sense of Nemesis which constitutes for us twentieth-century men our modern eschatology.'

In such an eschatological crisis what, then, is the function of prayer? Dr. Spinks restricts it to the petitions offered in Gethsemane and on Golgotha: *Father, not my Will but Thine be done; Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit.* This indeed is truly right as far as it goes, but we could have wished that Dr. Spinks had gone further. Granting that prayer does not operate in the external mechanical side of the universe, but that its effective sphere is within the moral, spiritual and rational consciousness of man, and that prayers in that sphere can secure for him who prays that 'Peace of God which passeth all understanding'—to use St. Paul's phrase—we ought to inquire whether our prayers cannot assist in securing the same Peace for others. Has not Prayer a telepathic influence? If this be so, then there is particular need that in an eschatological crisis we should pray also for others as well as for ourselves, as indeed Jesus did on the cross: *Father, forgive them for they know not what they do.* It was perhaps of this telepathic power of prayer that Tennyson was primarily think-

ing when he wrote 'There are more things wrought by prayer than this *world* dreams of'; this is also expressed in the opening clause of our Prayer for all Sorts and Conditions of Men: *That thou wouldest be pleased to make thy ways known unto them, thy saving health unto all nations.*

Such prayer would not prevent atomic bombs exploding, but it might prevent atomic energy being misused.

Christianity and Churchianity

Our attention has been called by a correspondent to a sermonette by the Very Rev. S. C. Carpenter, Dean of Exeter, published in the *Daily Telegraph* of May 1st. The sermonette opens thus:

> 'There is a very widespread belief that in the present unhappy condition of the world what is wanted is "more Christianity." Many of those who would agree with the prescription do not help to make it up. The extent to which the population of England — elsewhere it is sometimes "better," sometimes "worse"—decline to avail themselves of what are called means of grace, held ready for them in the Church, is such that it might be supposed to bring deep discouragement to those who minister or themselves eagerly use such means of grace. It does not in fact discourage us, because it is a human phenomenon, and human phenomena do not discourage those who believe in Christ. Nevertheless, the degree of abstention is very great.'

It is very difficult for earnest clergymen to realize that the religion of the great bulk of English people is neither ecclesiastical nor sacramental. When they come across these non-ecclesiastical and non-sacramental people — and they do come across them in very large numbers — they almost invariably regard them as non-Christian. It is natural enough that they should do this, for their own religion is dominantly ecclesiastical and sacramental: their seminarist training and their conscientious discharge of the rites of the Church is bound to develop this temper of mind and standard of judgment. It is, however, something which we believe the clergy ought to guard against. If we are earnest parish priests, we should be delighted to see all our parishioners attend divine service, and especially the Holy Communion; we are sure it would help them greatly and that they would be all the better for it. Quite so, but we ought also to recognize that there is another kind of Christian religion, in which private prayer and trying to do one's daily duty are the real sacraments; that these people do develop Christian characters; and, last but not least, that their religion does realize in some measure the religion taught by Jesus Christ in His Beatitudes, His Two Commandments and the Lord's Prayer.

This religion may be rightly described as the Religion of the

Kingdom of God. It is a form of the Christian religion which is earlier than that of Apostolic and Catholic Christianity. This later form has been a valuable supplement to the Religion of the Kingdom of God, but there is great need that we should not regard as non-Christians those whose conception of Christian religion does not extend beyond the Religion of the Kingdom as taught by Jesus. There is not the slightest doubt that the world to-day has a tremendous need for the Religion of the Kingdom of God, and that the highest form of civilization and the noblest type of human character cannot be developed without it: it is in that sense that there is a widespread, and we believe a growing, belief that what is wanted is 'more Christianity.' But this 'more Christianity'—and the Church authorities would do well to recognize it—does not mean more ecclesiastical and sacramental Christianity.

We are not urging that the Christian Church should disband itself or that it should cease to make use of sacramental rites, but that it should teach people that the Church and Sacraments are very good servants but can be very bad masters, and that loyalty to the Kingdom of God and devotion to its service is the primary duty of the Christian. If this were done we are convinced both Church and Sacraments would gain in value for a number of these non-ecclesiastical and non-sacramental Christians.

Church Finance and Lay Control

Church finance is becoming more and more a prominent subject of discussion at Church conferences. An apostolic poverty was a characteristic of the most ancient apostolic Church; this is expressed in the words of its chief apostle—*Silver and gold have I none*. In the *Didache*, an early second-century Church Order, the Christian prophet who asked for silver is thereby discredited. Eusebius, the church historian, records that the giving of salaries to bishops was first practised by the Schismatics. For several centuries, although the ministers of the primitive Church received first fruits and other occasional offerings from the faithful, they subsisted for the most part on their own resources. As a certain medieval Pope is believed to have remarked, as he witnessed the money of the Catholic world pouring into the Papal treasury, 'Things have much improved since St. Peter's day.'

In the Church of England, for instance, the Church endowments, until recently administered with admirable ability by Q.A.B. and the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, amounted to some £350,000,000. Such simple facts as these should be borne in mind even in an economic age by Church assemblies when dis-

cussing Church finance. We realize that, as members of the professional class, many English clergymen have very small professional incomes, and we are sure that the laity who are cognizant of this and value the services of the clergy are desirous of relieving such clerical poverty.

There is, however, another side. This has been expressed by Rear-Admiral Oldham as reported in *The Times* of May 10th:

> 'Rear-Admiral R. W. Oldham said at a meeting of the Chamber of Laity of the diocese of Chichester at Brighton on May 8th that the middle classes of churchgoers were not prepared to give unqualified support from their wages to a regular contribution to stipends. It was like some form of taxation without effective representation. After three years' work on diocesan ruridecanal and parochial church councils, he had come to the conclusion that the clergy did not want to go into partnership with the laity except for certain purposes. They wanted the "dirty work" done by what they called devoted laymen, but they wanted to keep control in their own hands.'

It is clear from this statement (and many would support it) that much more real control must be given to the laity in church affairs —control not simply of church finance but of church services and appointments to parishes — if the laity on a large scale are to contribute to church funds. In parishes where this control is possessed by the laity and their clergy are co-operative and popular, clerical poverty is eliminated, provided of course that the parish be not so poor and small that it is out of the question to expect it to support its incumbent financially. The problem then becomes diocesan and falls within the sphere of 'archidiaconal functions'; in such cases the temporary union of parishes is perhaps the best remedy. We are convinced, however, that public lamentations, demands for Ember pennies, and perpetual appeals to the laity to relieve clerical poverty, discredit the Church, humiliate the parochial clergy and, last but not least, bring in a diminishing return.

The Fourth Centenary of the Prayer Book

Our English Prayer Book was published in 1549 and so next year will be its fourth centenary. The best book of devotion in the English language we owe to the liturgical genius of Archbishop Cranmer. It contains an unparalleled collection of Christian devotions, beginning with the Lord's Prayer and extending down to the days of Charles II. Its services are enriched by contributions derived from the Oriental and Mozarabic liturgies, the Sacramentaries of three great Popes, and the compositions of Spanish, German and English reformers. The First Prayer Book of King Edward VI

has undergone five revisions in England : those of 1552, 1559, 1603, 1662 and 1927-1928, and a number of other revisions in Scotland, Ireland, the United States and the British Dominions. The book of 1549 and its four revised successors were authorized by Church and State; the fifth revision (1927-1928), after two attempts, failed to secure the authority of Parliament and possesses no legal validity.

To-day we are conscious that there are in our Prayer Book a number of authorized scriptural beliefs which modern advance in knowledge has discredited and which ought in a new revision to be expurgated or, better still, restated in modern terms. To revise our Prayer Book to-day we need a modern use of that sound learning, moral courage and literary ability which characterized Cranmer and his colleagues who created and revised the Edwardian Prayer Book; but we also need to remember that four centuries have passed, and that the spirit of truth has guided Christian thought into a truer understanding of some aspects of Christian faith and duty than was possessed by our Christian ancestors. The reform of Church doctrine embodied in the Edwardian Prayer Book led its authors to face the terrible penalty of the stake. No such penalty faces our reformers of Church doctrine to-day, but the moral courage demanded, especially from our Bishops, if they would achieve this doctrinal reform in the face of traditional conservatism and doctrinal reaction, is very considerable and needs to be augmented by no little wisdom and love.

But in addition to doctrinal reform there is great need for the enrichment and modernization of our public services. The needs of the modern world and of modern personal life differ from those of Tudor and Stuart times; hence not only additional services but also new forms of prayer and praise are needed. Many valuable contributions have been made in this sphere, particularly by ex-Chaplains of the Forces and from the devotional compositions of Free Churchmen and ministers of the Kirk of Scotland. But there is need to be reminded of the great liturgical wealth of our own Prayer Book, and this, judiciously handled, could contribute much towards the creation of new forms of service suitable for modern needs. W. E. Gladstone's *Manual of Family Prayers*, in which he restricted himself entirely to the contents of the Prayer Book, is a remarkable and surprising example of what can be effected by judicious redistribution.

A third necessity for the revision of our Prayer Book is a deliberate relaxation of uniformity. We need to retain in the public services of our National Church continuity with the past and also those characteristics and ideals of public worship which are en-

shrined in our Prayer Book, but we must provide in various ways for a departure from rigid uniformity. The older English religious temperament could not bear change in church services: modern English youth demands it. There ought to be a number of alternative forms of service which may be freely used by the officiating clergy with the consent of their congregations; there ought also to be opportunities given for a restricted use of extemporaneous prayer, and for the use of prayers not contained in the Prayer Book.

All thoughtful Churchmen recognize that most of the difficulties which Prayer Book revision has to encounter are due to the Church of England, alone of all Churches, consisting of three schools of Churchmanship; and that, although all three schools can live together in fellowship and Christian charity, it is extremely difficult for them to agree in their devotional ideals and practice. This has to be frankly recognized by our Prayer Book revisers. One way of doing this would be for the Church authorities to invite the leaders of all three schools to produce their own revised Prayer Book and, when the revised books have been produced, for an attempt to be made to combine them into one volume in such a way as to secure the loyal support of all. Only such a book can hope to secure the authority of Parliament and the Church Assembly.

The best way of celebrating the fourth centenary of the English Prayer Book is not simply by services of thanksgiving for this precious manual of divine worship, but by producing a worthy revision of it which will revive and extend its beneficent influence.

One Easter or Two?

Once more the proposal for a fixed Easter is being discussed in the Press. The State is not to blame for English people not having secured the convenience of a fixed Easter. The failure to achieve this reform, if it be a reform, lies at the door of the Church —but the Church in this case is not the Church of England, but the Church of Rome. It hardly seems right that the English people should be at the mercy of an Italian prelate in this matter, but so it is. Until the Pope agrees to a fixed Easter the Act of Parliament which authorizes it cannot be implemented by an Order in Council, and there appears to be a decreasing probability that the successors of the infallible pontiff who refused to agree to a fixed Easter will ever give way. The *Act to regulate the date of Easter Day* was passed by Parliament in 1928, and the Papal attitude was more conciliatory then than in 1942, when a

Papal decision was published that the proposal must be opposed on the ground of 'deep-rooted tradition.' In that case must English people be deprived of the conveniences of a fixed Easter for ever?

How great the conveniences of a fixed Easter are is hardly realized. It is not merely the holiday-makers who are concerned: the educational, the commercial, the financial, the statistical, the legal, as well as the travelling world would all be saved from innumerable inconveniences if Easter could be fixed. Among the strongest supporters of a fixed Easter were the League of Nations Transit Commission and the International Chamber of Commerce. It seems to us impossible, therefore, to suppose that the demand for a fixed Easter is going to be allowed to lapse: on the other hand the Pope will not give way.

There is, however, a *tertium quid* which does not seem to us to have received sufficient attention. It is this: keep the religious observance of Easter in accordance with the ecclesiastical system of reckoning, but institute in addition a fixed Easter for the convenience of the non-ecclesiastical world. This fixed Civic Easter need not necessarily coincide with the date (the Sunday after the second Saturday in April) fixed by the Act of 1928. That date was very properly a compromise, which it was hoped would meet the needs of both the ecclesiastical and the civic worlds. In fixing the Civic Easter, ecclesiastical desires need not be taken into consideration as those desires would be met by the Ecclesiastical Easter. It might be best, indeed, to put the Civic Easter on April 1st or May 1st, but this is a decision which has to be made by the liberated civic world. The ecclesiastics, however, may protest against this separation of the Civic from the Ecclesiastical Easter because it may lead to a diminishing observance of the Church's Easter season by the public; we take the opposite view.

What we propose would, we believe, check the increasing secularization of Easter which the present coincidence of the ecclesiastical with the holiday Easter is promoting. The growing habit of holiday making, combined with increased facilities for cheap travel, are taking more and more Church people away from their parish churches at this religious season, thus reducing the attendance at the Good Friday and Easter Day services. Many of the parochial clergy have been cheered by the church attendance at their Easter services this year. This increase in attendance has been due, we believe, not to an increase in parochial piety, but to the decrease of the allowances of petrol for motor traffic which has prevented parishioners from going away for their Easter holiday.

Were the Civic Easter holiday season separated from the religious observance of the Ecclesiastical Easter festival it would be to the advantage of our Church life.

It may perhaps be urged that to have two Easters, an Ecclesiastical Easter and a Civic Easter, must produce confusion. In that case the term *Spring Bank Holiday* could be substituted as the popular term for the Civic Easter.

Our proposal, if legalized, might even promote the staggering of the present Easter-time holiday traffic.

The Arch-Schismatic

The following letter by the Bishop of Truro, published in *The Times* of May 18th, is as significant as it is depressing :

> 'Sir,—I recently returned from the Congress of Europe at The Hague. It has been an inspiring and successful Congress, and more practical conclusions have been reached than might have been anticipated. But, in view of the terribly critical character of the present situation, and believing, as the great majority of us do, that the civilization of Europe has been built up, broadly speaking, on Christian foundations, and that the humanism of the future must be Christian humanism, I and many others were deeply disappointed that no religious service was held in connexion with the Congress on Sunday, May 9.
>
> 'The Rev. J. M. Richardson (recently Moderator of the Free Church Federal Council) and I approached the Roman Catholic authorities with the suggestion that the plenary session of the Congress on Sunday morning should be preceded by a short service. We suggested : Psalm 67, the Parable of the Good Samaritan, the Lord's Prayer, silent prayer, the conclusion of the service to be left in the hands of a Roman Catholic bishop. But, to our great sorrow, the bishop whom we approached declined to co-operate.
>
> 'Surely our Roman Catholic friends realize that the great body of Christians in Great Britain, both of the Church of England and of the Free Churches, are sincerely anxious to turn over a new leaf in our relationship with them, and to make a united stand against the pressing attack of materialism and atheism. But this refusal to pray with us is a really dreadful hindrance. How shall we ever come together unless we pray together? As I read the New Testament, I cannot believe that Our Lord would not desire that His own Prayer should not be used by His followers together, in spite of all their serious differences. I would most earnestly appeal to the Roman Catholic authorities to join with other Christians, separated and unworthy though we be, on points where we all sincerely agree. Yours, &c., J. W. Truron:

The Papal veto in the sphere of Christian reunion is as persistent as the Bolshevist veto in the case of international peace. Both powers desire peace, but both are totalitarian and will only grant peace to those who accept their ideology and submit themselves to their policy. A Roman Catholic woman, about to be executed for treason, said to the English chaplain attending her :

'I will not say *Amen* to your prayers, and you shall not say *Amen* to mine.' In so acting she was loyal to the discipline of her Church. This was more than three centuries ago, and the Papal policy is unchanged. Whether such a policy ought to be that of a Christian Church, the supreme article of whose faith is *God is love* and whose primary command is *Thou shalt love*, is not so easy to answer as some might suppose.

Meanwhile it is perfectly clear that, in the face of such a situation, co-operation with Rome is rendered impossible. 'Peace hath her victories no less renowned than War,' but the victories of peace seem more difficult to achieve and to demand much more preparation and perseverance. To our mind it would be much better for the non-Roman Churches to concern themselves with truth and freedom in religion as essential constituents of Christian love, and abandon, until Rome has changed her policy, attempts at appeasement which can only serve to camouflage the real situation.

We do not deprecate the Bishop of Truro's appeal. It does seem strange that although Christians, Jews and Moslems have been able to unite in saying the Lord's Prayer together, yet Roman Catholics cannot do so. This is because the Papacy prohibits it; and until the Papacy publicly authorizes such prayer, there is no use in asking Roman Catholics to practise it.

IN MEMORIAM

G. L. H. HARVEY

George Leonard Hunton Harvey, Vice-President of the Modern Churchmen's Union and Vicar of St. Stythians, Cornwall, passed away on May 13th after a long and painful illness borne with unflinching fortitude and considerate cheerfulness.

A son of the Rev. George Harvey, Vicar of St. Zennor, Cornwall, he graduated at Wadham College, Oxford, spent a year at Ripon Clergy College, and was ordained in 1905. In the First World War he served as a T.C.F. for a couple of years; he then joined up as a combatant, enlisting in the ranks, and became a Second Lieutenant in the Green Howards. He went through much of the fighting on the Somme. After the armistice he returned to clerical life and held a large number of cures, the most important being Rector of Sutton Coldfield, Birmingham (1931-1944).

He was a stalwart and judicious Modernist and made two able contributions on behalf of theological and ecclesiastical Liberal-

ism in the Church of England. These were *The Church and the Twentieth Century*,[1] a volume of essays of which he was editor and to which he contributed *Nova et Vetera*, we venture to think the ablest essay in the volume. His other contribution, slighter in form but of great practical importance, dealt with the marriage of divorced persons.[2] In this he maintained that the action of Convocation in prohibiting the clergy from marrying anyone again, who had a divorced partner alive, was legally *ultra vires*. The ultimate decision in such a case rests, not with Convocation, but with the parochial incumbent.

On his deathbed he wrote a long letter to the writer of this obituary notice, expressing characteristic convictions and reflections which we are sure his personal friends will value. He wrote:

> 'Since the day my doctor frankly admitted my situation I have experienced a new peace and happiness. . . .
>
> 'In my present condition I cannot but, so far as I can judge, be honest with myself. I have no longing for a future life, and indeed do not count myself worthy of the Resurrection. All this I willingly leave to the will of the God who is Love. As you know, I have long been under the influence of Tennant. His teaching has stood the test of my long illness. He finds the basis of faith in the creation as we experience it, without any confusion of creation and Creator. His argument from the rationality of the creation, though I acknowledge its power and validity, does not seem to me germane to my present situation. On the other hand his argument from the world's beauty and its function as a vale of soul-making appeals to me with an enhanced power. My bed is on the ground floor in front of a large window, and I look out on a lawn surrounded with shrubs and backed by trees in which there is a rookery. I also have a good view of a considerable expanse of sky. At times my sense of beauty seems intensified far beyond the normal. At such times the loveliness of the creation speaks to me very clearly of the Creator. My room is supplied with flowers, and in particular, a tiny bowl of small wood-anemones gives me the same kind of message. All this, for which I am deeply grateful, seems strange, as I should not have said that I was specially sensitive in the aesthetic sphere.
>
> 'My perception of the world as "a vale of soul-making" is closely bound up with an intense realization of the unearned and undeserved affection and friendship which have been my lot. I wonder whether we clergy at all realize how richly we receive in this respect? Looking back, I think that we are altogether too reserved. A world which is so rich in love and friendship is in that aspect a "vale of soul-making." Of course there are many other aspects of that tremendous fact; but it is on that aspect that I dwell as I lie here and think of the kindnesses I have received so generously in past years. A friend sent me an inscription he found on a sun-dial:

[1] Macmillan, 1936.

[2] *The Clergy and Marriage of the Divorced.* M.C.U., Steeple Claydon Vicarage, Bletchley, Bucks; 1/3.

"Time is

Too slow for those who wait;
Too swift for those who fear;
Too long for those who grieve;
Too short for those who rejoice;
But for those who love—

Time is Eternity."

'I enjoy much happiness and am at peace. The memory of so many kindnesses, which I have done little enough to earn, leaves me very humble.'

His experiences during a brief period spent in hospital were not so happy. He wrote of them:

'When I was in Hospital I was horrified to find how darkly Fundamentalist was *every one* who spoke with me about religion. One man, who happened to receive Holy Communion with me, remarked afterwards that the great enemy of Religion is Science. I wondered how the clergy and ministers who have had charge of these men could have allowed them to sink to such depths of obscurantism. They have failed in their duty, and a heavy price will be exacted in the future.

'I was very interested indeed, while in Hospital, to meet a Methodist Minister . . . While in London he was on friendly terms with a neighbouring Church of England clergyman who was disturbed in conscience by the rigid diocesan regulation prohibiting remarriage of the divorced. There were cases where he found it intolerable to send the parties to the Register Office. So, in these cases, he sent them to his Methodist friend with a personal recommendation, and he married them in his Chapel. What a mess, when an honourable conscientious man is reduced to such straits! Of course the remedy is in his own hands. He ought to refuse to be intimidated by diocesan regulations which are entirely *ultra vires*.

'I am disappointed that I shall not be at the Ripon Hall jubilee celebrations. Whether I still linger on or whether I have passed away, I should like you, if you can remember, to give the gathering a message from me of good cheer, and my good wishes that the Hall may continue ever to be inspired by the spirit of faith, courage, and high adventure.'

H.D.A.M.

ENGLISH MODERNISM: ITS PRINCIPLES AND PROSPECTS*

By the Very Rev. W. R. Inge, K.C.V.O., D.D., F.B.A.

SOME of us may remember a controversy between Gladstone and Thomas Huxley about the miracle of the Gadarene swine. The Liberal leader was not troubled like the farmer who said, 'I want to know who paid for them drownded pigs.' More recently, in the famous 'monkey trial' at Dayton, Tennessee, Bryan, who stood against Theodore Roosevelt for the Presidency of the United States, was cross-examined: 'Mr. Bryan, do you believe that the whale swallowed Jonah?' 'I do, because the Bible says so.' 'And if the Bible said that it was Jonah who swallowed the whale, would you believe that?' 'Yes.' Within living memory these two men who held, or hoped to hold, perhaps the greatest positions in the world, professed the most uncompromising belief in the verbal inspiration of the Bible. We seem to have travelled a long way since then, and we Modern Churchmen may be thankful that we are no longer committed to Tertullian's *credibile quia absurdum*. But we must consider what the change means.

The Victorian conflict between religion and science was a duel between dogmatic materialism and materialistic dogmatism. If miracles really happened, Christianity is true; if they did not happen, it is false. The scientists did not like being called materialists, but they did all their thinking on the assumption that reality consists of things that can be counted, weighed, and measured, and that natural law, which they still persist in miscalling causation, is invariable. (Invariable sequence is not causation; we do not say that winter is the cause of summer, or day of night.) I do not attach much importance to the new theory that natural laws are 'only statistical.' The orthodox clung to one or both of two external authorities — the Church and the Bible: but they also complained, quite reasonably, that science ignored the reality of all spiritual values, and treated them as what they called epiphenomena, floating ineffectually over the real world of stars and atoms. It is not only religion that was so ignored. How would a materialist describe violin-playing? 'Drawing the tail of a dead horse across the entrails of a dead cat.' In natural beauty, and in

*An address delivered to the Modern Churchmen's Union in the Central Hall, Westminster, on May 26th, 1948.

art, man recognizes something akin to his own highest faculties, and receives a communication from the spiritual world. Is not this a special grace, not to be accounted for as a means to survival?

This crude conflict is now out of date. Science has become religiously humble; religion scientifically humble. Most of our physicists (perhaps not most of our biologists) accept some kind of idealism. Eddington was an earnest Quaker; Jeans a mentalist like Berkeley; Aldous Huxley almost a Buddhist. The intellectuals, as Berdyaeff says truly, are beginning to turn to religion. Lotze says that natural law is of universal validity but of limited importance. What did he mean by this dictum?

Space and Time are the warp and woof of the canvas on which we draw our pictures of things and events, but not of ultimate values, which cannot be so represented. While we live here we are amphibious creatures, living partly in a world of ponderable and transient things, and partly in a world of imponderable and eternal values. The soul of man is in contact with what is above us — Spirit, and with what is below us — Matter. This uncertain position is the source of nearly all our problems.

To intercalate acts of God among laws of nature is an obvious expedient in a pre-scientific age. To us it is doubly unsatisfactory. If an outbreak of pestilence may be caused either by an infected water-supply or by the decision of the government to hold a census, as in the reign of King David, there is an end of natural science. And on the side of religion, what do miracles prove? To take one example. Several intelligent people saw Home the medium fly out of a top-floor window. If he did so, the law of gravitation is unreliable. If he did not, in certain circumstances sane people may see things that are not there. Most of us accept the second solution. But we do not suppose that any truth of religion depends on our answer, or that Mr. Home may perhaps be deserving of divine honours. If we think quite otherwise about the bodily ascension of Christ it is because we are not thinking or speaking in the language of natural science. The natural language of faith is unconscious poetry or symbolism. We believe that Christ rose because those who in St. Paul's words are 'risen with Him,' and who, as our collect says, can 'in heart and mind thither ascend' whither He has gone, know that that place is not somewhere beyond the clouds, but 'closer than breathing and nearer than hands and feet.' 'Lo, I am with you all the days, even to the end of the world.' That promise has been fulfilled; apart from it, the empty tomb is nothing.

When Lotze said that natural law is of limited importance he meant that the study of nature is an abstract science, which for its

own purposes neglects a whole range of truths which for philosophy and art, as well as for religion, are of supreme importance—all those truths which Bismarck called the imponderable, and which philosophers have agreed to distinguish as Goodness or Love, Truth and Beauty. But we must not forget that Science does pay homage to one of the ultimate values — Truth. We must not despise or ignore this visible world, as if it were our lot on earth to walk in a vain shadow and disquiet ourselves in vain. A journey through the unreal is an unreal journey. A world where nothing really happens is not the real world. Christianity teaches a sacramental view of nature. The Incarnation itself was a sacrament, a mystery, as our Prayer Book says, using the Greek word for sacrament. All things end in a mystery, as has been wisely said. It must be so, because while we live here we can only see as in a mirror, by means of symbols. The more I study St. Paul, the more struck I am by the deep wisdom of the words in which he speaks of his inmost spiritual experience. Or we may remember the First Epistle of St. John: 'Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He is manifested we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.' All our knowledge must be symbolic; but for the Christian, as for the Platonist, Time is the moving image or likeness of Eternity, not a mere phantasmagoria. Wordsworth often speaks of the function of poetry, to see and reveal the infinite in the finite.

In what sense is Christianity a historical religion? I do not mean by historical religion the past history of religious communities, nor the attempt to find the essence of religion in its primitive forms. I mean a religion which places its credentials in the actual occurrence of particular facts in the past, or in the confident expectation of events in the future, or which finds in the course of events the biography of an evolving immanent Spirit.

The words of Lessing are well known. 'Unrepeated isolated facts can least of all testify to the untransitory and everlasting.' No isolated event in the past can be the basis of a belief. If an alleged event no longer seems coherent with the system of which it forms a part, it either ceases to be credible or is transferred to some other branch of knowledge, and becomes a problem for natural history or the science of medicine. The salvation wrought by Christ is not a catastrophic innovation, but a supreme revelation of the love of God for the world. This is a totally different view of history from the older view that God governs the world by occasional *coups d'état*. The old view was that certain events are important because they interrupted the course of nature; the later

view is that they are important because they did not. Things really happen, and affect the future; but we must be very chary of saying that some events are acts of God, others parts of nature. Liberal Churchmen dislike the word supernatural; they prefer the word spiritual. To isolate an event in the past is to make it meaningless. God does not intervene occasionally in a derelict world.

The modern world inherits several traditions. The most important event in the history of religion is the almost simultaneous appearance of a higher religion about the middle of the first millennium before Christ, in China, India, Persia, Palestine and Greece. We are now learning to pay due respect to the wisdom of the East. In Palestine the later prophets transformed the crude tribal worship of a Beduin tribe into what we call Judaism, a religion which owed much more than we realize to the religion of Persia. In the Greek communities the sacramental cults of Orphism and Pythagoreanism were the basis of Platonism, which was never more alive than it is to-day. Palestinian prophetism culminated in the revelation of Christ, 'the prophet of Nazareth in Galilee,' and the Christian Church is a fusion of prophetic Judaism, thus exalted to its highest pitch, with the European heirs of the Orphic and Platonic tradition.

Modern historicism belongs to neither tradition. History for the Jews was a theodicy, but evolutionary optimism was never part of their religion. Acts of God were, for them, catastrophic. The Greek thinkers believed in cycles, a cosmic pulsation of progress and decline. Their universities had no chairs of history.

It was in the eighteenth century that the idea of Time as the friend took root. Perfectibility became an article of faith, and this dream profoundly influenced philosophy, politics and religion in the nineteenth. It branched into several offshoots. Hegel almost identified the logical process of reason with the evolution in time of the divine life, now triumphantly manifested in the kingdom of Prussia. In Spencer and even in Darwin we have the theory that progress is exhibited in increasing complexity of structure, and that history describes the survival of the best, as well as of the fittest to survive. Liberalism, especially in America, taught that the triumph of democracy is a revelation of the will of God. Socialism and Communism turned the evolutionary doctrine into a kind of automatic apocalyptism.

The last Western heresy, as the Catholics call it, has perhaps been killed by the horrible events of our own time. But the notion of an evolving God still haunts our philosophy, in spite of F. H. Bradley's warning. It makes it difficult to accept the fact of a supreme revelation two thousand years ago. 'They didn't know

everything down in Judee,' said Lowell's John P. Robinson. There are some progressists, it seems, who think Epstein a greater sculptor than Pheidias, and Picasso a greater painter than Raphael. But this throwing our ideals into the future, which Bosanquet says is the death of sane idealism, has no foundation if Christian philosophy — the *philosophia perennis* — is true. An absolute unchanging God: a spiritual world exalted above time and place; time as the moving image of an unmoving eternity; the good always to be striven for in a world where evil is a very positive power — these beliefs are incompatible with the doctrine that reality is historical, an exhibition of comsic and ineluctable progress. The worst offenders are the Italian New Idealists, but many others, like Bergson, are infected with the error. Progress is really sporadic, partial, and insecure, and the ultimate doom of all life is said to be certain. Will the 'emerging' Deity share the fate of his world. It is a monstrous notion, but a God who becomes is a God who disbecomes. Reality is superhistorical.

We must, however, distinguish between history as what actually happened and history as our record of events. What confidence can we place in these records? The actual course of events might be important to us, and would certainly be interesting; but (speaking respectfully) God only knows what it was. The Deity, we are told, cannot alter the past; but historians can and do. History, said Napoleon, is *une fable convenue*, fiction agreed upon; he wrote part of his own fable himself. Goethe makes Faust say to Wagner:

> 'To us, my friend, the times that are gone by
> Are a mysterious book, sealed with seven seals;
> That which you call the spirit of ages past
> Is but in truth the spirit of some few authors
> In which those ages are beheld reflected
> With what distortion strange heaven only knows.'

'Read me anything you like,' said Walpole to his sick-nurse, 'except history; I know that can't be true.' 'A man who has been concerned in a transaction,' says Lord Chesterfield, 'will not write it fairly; a man who has not, cannot.' Matthew Paris in the thirteenth century complains: 'The lot of historical writers is hard. If they tell the truth they provoke men, and if they write what is false they offend God.' Sir Walter Raleigh says: 'Whoever in writing history shall follow truth too near the heels, it may haply strike out his teeth.' The motives for falsifying history are in proportion to the interest of posterity in knowing the truth. 'Nothing worthy can be proven, nor yet disproven.' 'Authority,' said Alan of Lille, 'has a nose of wax; it can be twisted either way.' Garbled history has had more influence upon conduct than true

history. And nothing has distorted reality more than hero-worship, patriotic or religious. What widely different opinions have been held about the characters of Alexander, Julius Caesar, Mohammed, Frederick the Great, Napoleon?

In view of such scepticism about past events and past lives, we cannot be surprised that criticism has torn to pieces the traditional figure of the Founder of our religion. No real person, but a mythical founder, a few have argued; a name, like Orpheus, Isis and Sarapis. 'A peasant of limited intelligence,' said Loisy. A political agitator, a mild specimen of the Mahdi type, according to others. It would still be possible to suggest, with Loisy, that we may acknowledge 'as it were two Christs'—the other the object of the Church's worship—and to say that if God wished His Church to exist He must have willed the only conditions under which it could have survived, including perhaps the Inquisition and the index of prohibited books. It would still be possible to practise a devout mysticism like the Indians and the Neoplatonists, quite independent of history.

If I believed that this view of the historical Jesus was even probable, I should not be standing here to-day. It seems to me fantastic. Apart from the noble teaching ascribed to Him by His not very intelligent reporters, it is certain that within a very few years of His shameful death His disciples were worshipping Him with the highest honours that could be heaped upon a leader. His Jewish disciples, some of whom had companied with Him in Galilee, honoured Him as the Messiah-designate, now at God's right hand in heaven, but soon to return to earth in His own person to inaugurate a reign of the saints as predicted in the Apocalypses. The Gentile converts worshipped Him as the Lord — *Kyrios* — the divine Saviour-God of their mysteries, and before long as the *Logos*, God manifesting Himself in creation, in history, and in the hearts of men. St. Paul, the first and greatest of Christian mystics, who had ample opportunities of hearing what those who had known the human Christ thought of Him, never doubted for a moment that the Holy Spirit who was the life of his life and the inspirer of his devoted activities, was in very deed the Spirit of Jesus, his divine Master, who after being obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, was highly exalted and given the name that is above every name. That such honours should have been paid to an unsuccessful pretender, like Theudas, seems to me absolutely impossible. Whether our Lord ever claimed to be the Messiah is beside the point. Personally I do not think He did — after all the Messiah was only a Jewish patriotic dream-figure. His disciples

paid Him the highest honours that they knew, and did so almost at once.

It may be that the revelation was rather less concentrated than we suppose. It takes two to tell the truth, one to speak and one to hear. Samuel Butler hints that a Founder may be only the peg on which His disciples hang their best thoughts. For my own part I do not separate the Christ of history from the Christ of experience, though I think that there is some danger in what has been called Jesus worship as distinguished from the worship of Him 'who is alive and was dead, and behold He is alive for evermore.'

I have tried to tell you why I am a Christian and a Modern Churchman. But I have been asked to say something about the future of our Society. A great deal of our work has been done, as we may see from the two stories which I told at the beginning of my address. But there are still several reforms which I think we ought to support:

Full recognition, with intercommunion, of other reformed Churches.

Interdenominational conferences, with a view to co-operation in pastoral work, to be held periodically.

Nonconformist ministers and laymen to be invited to preach, at the discretion of the incumbent.

Women to be admitted to the priesthood.

Congresses of religions to be encouraged, especially in the hope of a better understanding between Asiatic and Western thought.

A more drastic revision of the Prayer Book and lectionary. Many parts of the Old Testament are for various reasons quite unsuitable for congregational use, and many find our Matins and Evensong tedious.

A simpler Creed to be authorized. An excellent Creed, consisting almost entirely of words from the First Epistle of St. John, was composed some years ago.

The training of some of our theological colleges is unsatisfactory. All clergymen should know something of medical psychology and pathology.

Every diocese should have a college of mission priests, who would visit every parish in turn. The parochial system, by itself, no longer works efficiently.

The relations of the sexes give rise to a number of very difficult problems which should engage the attention of our authorities.

We must face the fact that the adoption of some of these reforms would make the breach with totalitarian Churches irreparable. Personally I should not regret this.

In conclusion, there are three cautions which I think are not out of place.

First, we must keep absolutely clear of politics. To entangle ourselves with the programme of any political party would be fatal. No Church, and very few Churchmen, have plunged into politics without coming out badly smirched. If a man wants to have a crowd behind him he may be anything rather than a Liberal Churchman. There will always be a crowd at the broad gate, and we do not want to join them. Who are the saints in our calendar? Origen and Erasmus certainly. They have both been cursed and abused by Protestants and Catholics alike, and we do not care two straws for the judgments against them. We are not out for popularity. Churches, as I once was bold enough to say, are secular institutions in which the half-educated cater for the half-converted. Berdyaeff, the great Russian thinker whose death we all deplore, said more civilly and more truly that the Church has had to humiliate itself for the sake of the common man. There is a sense in which that is true, but there is a kind of humiliation which we have no right to submit to. We are not, and we must never be, court-chaplains of King Demos. That is not the way to win the best of the working-class. They are too good, and too shrewd, to want to employ us in that way.

Berdyaeff says that there will certainly be a great revival of Christianity, but that it must come through persecution. 'The Church may have to go back to the Catacombs.' In Russia, yes; we see the revival in progress; the churches are full again, and the Anti-God propaganda has been given up. In the West nothing so severe is to be expected; but we too may have to remember the often-repeated warnings of Christ: 'If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you. In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.'

My second point concerns our relations with traditionalists. It is a difficult question for us clergy, because it affects us as men of honour. When we preach on the great festivals of the Church we know what many of our hearers would like us to say, and they are just the things which we do not want to say. Every man must settle this difficulty for himself. But we remember what John Huss said when a pious old woman brought a faggot to the pile which was to burn him alive: '*O sancta simplicitas!*' There are some people who think that any stigma is good enough to beat a dogma;

but this is uncharitable. Not only do these untransparent middle forms, of dogma and cultus, still serve as a bridge between the world of things and the world of values, but they have gathered round them sacred associations and feelings of loyalty which are worthy of respect. We can none of us do without symbols; Plato with his myths knew that very well; and a symbol is what it means to those who have learnt to value it. We grant that readily enough in other fields. An Englishman in the late war was murdered by the Japanese because he refused to trample on the Union Jack. On a piece of striped bunting? No; there was much more in it than that. The Comte de Chambord might have been accepted as King of France if he had not insisted on retaining the old white flag of the Bourbons. 'He gave up a kingdom for a pocket-handkerchief,' said Bismarck. And the French were equally attached to another rag, the tricolor. These scruples are not contemptible. The Reds in Spain tortured and murdered hundreds of priests and nuns who might have saved their lives by a mere gesture of apostasy. As a general principle, Liberal clergy ought to make clear the grounds of their faith, thereby helping those who are kept outside by their inability to accept traditional dogmas, but not to discredit, by appeals to natural science, beliefs which, though they are expressed in the language of secular knowledge, are really rooted in their association with religious faith. This means, alas, that we must learn to tolerate intolerance, for no forts are more stubbornly defended than castles in the air. We should remember that the clergy are opticians, whose job it is to provide people with every degree of myopia with spectacles to help them to see the invisible. There can be no standardized pair for everybody, for the learned professor and his kitchenmaid.

Lastly, 'take heed to thyself, and to the doctrine,' and to thyself first. I think it was Samuel Johnson who said of Addison, 'he thinks justly, but he thinks faintly.' Do some of us think faintly? Do we believe as deeply as some of those whose beliefs we despise? Beliefs not deeply felt and not bravely acted on lie bedridden in some dormitory of our souls and fade away into mere speculative opinions. Half-beliefs and make-beliefs! How large a place they fill in our mental furniture! It is sometimes said that Protestantism does not produce saints. I am not sure. Catholicism hardens into cultus; Liberal Protestantism softens into culture. The Catholic type of sainthood is not altogether to our liking. But we shall not win the confidence of our neighbours unless we convince them that a Modernist, whether or not he is a good Churchman, may be a very good Christian.

THE FUTURE OF THE MODERNIST MOVEMENT*

I. The Outlook in 1948

MY theme is the future of the Modernist Movement. We are anxious that we should play our part in the effort to focus the critical issues of the times and see if we can help towards discerning the destiny of mankind and the way to its attainment. We believe as Modern Churchmen that in the Church of England there is a great spiritual heritage which can serve as the leaven to mould public opinion in this country and bring about an appreciation of what spiritual life really means for the national existence.

We believe that one critical thing which is lacking to-day is the belief in an unseen world. Man is so preoccupied with affairs, with material existence and developments, that he is losing the sense that there is another world superior to this and is failing to adjust his plans and his vision to the belief that there is a power higher than the power in this world — and one which is very much concerned with developments here. It seems so unsound to adopt an attitude towards life which ignores certain overriding matters of fact if they really exist.

We feel that the ages have tried to bring home to man some such vision as that of Plato, of Plotinus, of St. Augustine, and again re-expressed by that great father of the Church, Dr. Inge, *i.e.* the idea of an unseen world behind and shaping this universe. To-day we learn afresh from nuclear physics and we see the whole of the material world resolve itself to 'energy.' Mass is equated to 'energy,' which itself is a mystery only manifested in terms of the equally unknown 'electricity' and 'magnetism.' One sees this material framework wearing very thin, and indeed science comes nearer and nearer to a vanishing point. It introduces more and more ultimates, but it only in the end has to surrender the conclusion as something that we do not understand. If it be indeed energy (whatever that may be), then it must be a manifestation of energy for some purpose. This means there must be another world which is working through this universe of ours.

Can we recapture for modern humanity and modern youth this conception that there is an Unseen World? Can we see how it

* Speech by Sir Henry Self, President of the Modern Churchmen's Union, at the Jubilee Meeting on May 26th, 1948.

would re-establish the sense of destiny and revitalize man's outlook? Would he not have to pause and wonder whether in effect he had got a true sense of proportion? But the truth is that is exactly what religion is. It is adjusting oneself to the background in which one believes. Man's religion must therefore express to him his basic conception of the background to life; but we can only get that if we try to re-express and re-establish the old traditional faith and belief in the light of modern experience and in terms that man can understand. Dr. Inge, who nobody would say wished to do any harm to religion, has well said that 'Religion is a powerful antiseptic, which preserves mummified customs that have long outlasted their usefulness, and otiose dogmas which have long lost their vitality.'

My deduction from this critical observation is that it is the essence of religious progress to preserve the essential by re-experiencing the basic truths of the past and re-expressing them as the guides to the present. The great urgency is that we should see this need to-day to re-express our belief in terms that modern people can understand, and when they understand they will accept it if they find it accords with experience. This acceptance is assured in the outcome because these ideals have come down to us through the ages by virtue of their great intrinsic value. They have to be re-expressed and recaptured and put to the world so that the world may see what there is in them of true value as confirmed by current experience. All through man's life he is trying to make explicit the ideals and values that are implicit in his experience. Our sense of values is to-day obscured because our values have not come out of our experience as they should have done. Man has failed to see that he can only make experience yield true results if he applies the traditions of the past in explanation of present experience, and then he sees those values, which have already meant so much for humanity, taking on new life in his own life.

In this task we need have no fear of science, but equally we shall be extremely foolish if we try and ignore the patent facts revealed by scientific research. No religious approach ever survived in its true stature and dignity if it did not recognize that mankind in all his efforts at their highest is truly trying to understand in some measure the Revelation of God. I beg we make this religion of ours a living force, by recapturing its essential values and bringing them to new life in human experience. This means re-expressing them in the light of the new insight that has come and will come from each and every form of man's enter-

prise, in so far as it is a valid expression of his higher and spiritual nature, whether intellectual, moral, creative or aesthetic. The Christian faith, if it is what we believe it to be, the hope and salvation of our civilization, can be the better realized in human life through such thought, practice and experience; and, so re-expressed, it can surely hope for wider and earlier acceptance. It is along this line that I suggest we must seek the hope of re-finding ourselves, not ignoring the three critical necessities of Faith, Freedom and Fellowship.

By Faith we don't mean dogmatic beliefs. We don't believe in calling black white. We believe in faith as an atmosphere, as an adventure, as an outlook on life. It means going forward facing the unknown in sure conviction that Spiritual Values are the fabric of the Unseen World.

We turn to Freedom, and we say: 'Yes, man is a free agent and must have the right to exercise his freedom in religion as in other matters.' But it is a spiritual freedom which thrives on spiritual values and rises above the mechanisms of physical and psychical determinism. We readily admit that the physical and even the psychical world may be governed by a chain of determinism turning on the sequence of cause and effect. But there is freedom, real freedom, spiritual freedom which springs from contact, meditation and prayer with the Unseen World. It is that freedom which alone can direct the physical and psychical worlds to their right ends.

We pass to the third point, which is Fellowship. If we have a real religion it must express itself in fellowship; it must recognize the contributions of East and West, North and South, because there is no spiritual life but that which gives and in the giving finds itself. It is only by Fellowship of spiritual life that man can be assured of the strength and the grace that are so essential if we are to go forward towards the destiny that lies ahead.

These are thus, I venture to say, the underlying principles behind the effort of the Modern Churchmen's Union in its desire to see the Christian faith re-expressed to the generation which will have to face these controversial and difficult times. We hope and believe that the Church will be able to re-express these fundamental Christian truths the better if it will take note of all the truth, the guidance and the experience that is at hand, whether from religion, science or art. We see the critical message needed to-day as a message to humanity calling for a rededication of life, which is based on a high destiny conceived in spiritual terms. A high destiny which will enable man to go forward with real hope,

provided always he can find that assurance of strength which will enable him to take the road so revealed and strive towards its end.

We are facing a troublesome era, yet the greater the trouble the greater the opportunity; and the greater the opportunity, the greater can be the destiny it opens. The first requisite is right vision; and the second, that adjustment of life which alone can open us to the inpouring of strength to achieve. With this, hope could once again be proclaimed to man.

II. The Prospects of the Future

Why, then, if this be the case, does the future yet seem, by general consent, so full of gloom? The explanation seems to be based on the fear that the old traditions have been outgrown by the new knowledge and that human civilization has to face a period of intense ordeal which will make or mar it; but if it is to be made and not marred, the making will, it is argued, be a re-creation on new principles and a drastically changed *Weltanschauung*. In this, Christianity is to have no part, being of necessity outgrown by man's realization of the insignificance of this world and its inhabitants in the cosmic setting. That seems to be the way the argument is running, and it behoves all of us who believe that the Christian faith is vital to human existence, to face the fact fairly and squarely that the majority of people to-day are indifferent to institutional religion and also would be obliged, if pressed, to acknowledge that they do not credit the credal claims of the Churches. In brief, orthodox Christianity has lost its grip and plays an inadequate part in human affairs.

It is of little use deploring the emptying of the churches and the attitude of the ultra-faithful who find consolation in the membership of a 'rump' of the 'elect.' The extremist preference for the rump with its esoteric ritual has contributed largely to the alienation of moderate-minded people — but this is rather a symptom than a cause. At rock bottom, the world at large finds itself unable to credit the claims for Christianity, and this is the basic reason why it has turned away from its embraces. The main grounds for this inability to credit the Christian claims seem to be three, *viz.*:

(*a*) it is increasingly difficult for the ordinary man to see any possible relevance for existence to-day in the life of a Jewish 'man of the people' who lived nearly two thousand years ago. This situation has been seriously aggravated by the shocks of two world wars this century and the advent of atomic power;

(*b*) in the light of modern science, it becomes increasingly difficult to identify the personal God of Christianity with the Power behind the universe as now revealed; and

(*c*) there seems to be a growing belief that human values can be discerned, pursued and achieved without reliance on such hypotheses as the Christian claims under (*a*) and (*b*) above. This seems to be typified by the picture of man's destiny presented by the eminent biologist, Sir Charles Sherrington, in his book *Man on his Nature*.

It is suggested that the modern re-presentation of Christianity must address itself primarily to these three points, and the broad answers seem to be on the following lines, *viz.*:

(*a*) No philosophy of life can be complete which does not take account of the other world, if such there be. But equally, that philosophy cannot be exclusively expressed in terms of that other world: the modern generation is right in its insistence on the relevance of this world as contributory to man's destiny. In brief, the 'philosophy of this world' must be married to the 'philosophy of the other world,' to provide a 'philosophy of both worlds.' In that, emphasis must be laid on the need for each world to have experience of the other. Therefore, if God be the focus of the other world, He must have experience of this world and this world must have experience of Him. Moreover, in such experience there must be (i) unique episodes which have the timeless character of 'Finality,' and also (ii) continuing inter-relationship within the time existence which is a necessary feature of our world. All of this opens the door wide to a presentation of the central theme of the life of Christ as offering the unique and final Revelation of the Personality of God, whilst at the same time enabling God to have direct experience of human life. The theme must be presented free from any thought of a God-Man walking the earth and fearlessly portray the significance of a truly human life yielding experience for the Divine Life, and itself a creative act of Divine love, whereby mankind has found its focus and inspiration, together with a continuing means of spiritual experience. This must be the prime fact in Christian teaching; the task has been well prepared by the efforts of prophet-like Dr. Inge, who has proclaimed in all his works the central doctrine of God as Himself active in and through the world of human endeavour. The orthodoxy of such an approach is convincingly testified by the late Archbishop Temple in his *Mens Creatrix* and *Christus Veritas*.

(*b*) The Christian claim that the God of personal religion as revealed by Jesus is to be identified with the Power behind the

whole universe as now conceived in its astronomical dimensions is a staggering possibility which the ordinary thinker is reluctant to credit. The claim can well be supported by reasoned argument based on the validity of religious experience at its highest, and reinforced by the realization by science itself that the infinitesimal order revealed by modern physics shows that the so-called 'material' world has worn very thin and given way to a void within which 'energy' manifests itself. The roads of religious experience and scientific thinking join in pointing to a background behind this life and this world; it is for Christians to have no hesitation in sustaining their claim that that background is based on the spiritual values which Christianity asserts are grounded in God, in Whom Personality is to be found. This is the conclusion hinted at by the late Sir Arthur Eddington as the result of his own experience and thought. In his famous Swarthmore Lecture he summed up the position by saying:

> 'We can and must believe that we have an inner sense of values which guides us . . . Consciousness alone can determine the validity of its convictions.'

So, employing the analogy he used in his Gifford Lectures, he observes that

> 'We have to build the spiritual world out of symbols taken from our own personality, as we build the scientific world out of the symbols of the mathematician. I think therefore we are not wrong in embodying the significance of the spiritual world to ourselves in the feeling of a personal relationship.'

In the light of this conclusion, Eddington expresses himself finally as a believer in the Personality of God:

> 'It is, I think, of the very essence of the unseen world that the conception of personality should dominate it.'

This is a basic line of approach for the modern presentation of Christianity, and one which would receive ready and wide attention, especially if it were coupled with the conception so ably advanced by Dr. C. C. J. Webb that it would be truer to say that 'Personality' is *in* God, rather than that God is personal.

(*c*) The idea that, like Laplace, the modern man has no need of the hypothesis of God or anything but himself for the realization and achievement of his values is the most pernicious of the modern tendencies undermining the religious life. It derives mainly from the amazing achievements of science and the inevitable drift towards a philosophy of scientific materialism. Herein lies the greatest danger not only for Christianity but even more so for the destiny of humanity itself. It must not merely engender a distorted conception of human destiny but also sap the strength to achieve. Reli-

gious history has revealed beyond a shadow of doubt, firstly that man's sense of *real* values has sprung from the revelation and inspiration of genius; and, secondly, that man has no strength in himself adequate to the task of actualization of the values so revealed: Pelagianism is a universal fallacy which flouts the fundamentals of human psychology. As for the revelation of values by genius, it would be difficult to deny that it springs from a sense of relationship to, and interpretation of, an unseen world. All genius is concerned to reveal the inner meaning of life and its background. Would it be possible for the process to proceed unless the two sides were *en rapport*? In that event, it is illogical to suggest that the interpretation proceeds without the collaboration, and indeed inspiration, of that which is behind the background. A lifeless inner world could not be revealed in terms of spiritual values: that would be a contradiction in terms. Spiritual values must derive from spiritual life, and a background screening spiritual life can only be interpreted by the living collaboration of the living beings on both sides of the screen.

It is thus reasonable to assert that human sense of spiritual values must derive from revelation by the spiritual counterpart to this world. But Christianity is the unique focus of the historical development of such human appreciation of spiritual values in the Western civilization. Moreover, the validity of history and of human endeavour depend inevitably on the validity of the essential strands of human tradition at its highest—in terms of spiritual values. The emphasis is rightly on 'essential,' and that is why the Modernist so stresses the need to slough off the huskings and present for modern acceptance the vital essentials of Christianity expressed in modern terms. Why then need the champions of that ancient faith hesitate to identify human values at their highest with those which have come to man through the Revelation of God not only in thought, art and moral striving, but even more so through the direct Revelation of His Personality as Love?

As already suggested, it is equally important to emphasize that only with the Revelation comes the strength to achieve. The modern generation needs to be reminded that self-help is a necessary contributory to the effort, but that by itself it must prove unavailing. This is the conclusion reached by the greatest saints from St. Paul downwards; and after all, the saints were and are the professionals from whom the gifted amateurs can well afford to learn.

Equally, a reminder is appropriate that human affairs can only be conducted advantageously if they are directed towards a valid

conception of human destiny. The drift from the churches has deprived ordinary men of the Christian corrective to the daily distortions of outlook springing from preoccupation with mundane affairs. The sense of man's destiny becomes unduly related to its possibilities in this world: it is for the guardians of the spiritual life of the nations to assert and re-assert the higher spiritual destiny of the human race and its members. Nowhere is that destiny better revealed than in the Christian tradition: it would be surprising if it were otherwise, seeing that the Christian *Ecclesia* or Church has dual functions as (*a*) the proclaimer of the spiritual values by which the universe is sustained, and (*b*) the manifestation here and now of the timeless society which calls each and every human being to a spiritual destiny within its company.

III. The Immediate Programme for Modernism

The outcome of our review seems thus to be an emphasis on four critical lines of activity in the immediate future — beyond that it would be premature to speculate.

(1) There must be a period of reconstruction of the Christian faith with a view to its progressive presentation in modern terms for modern consideration, criticism and acceptance. The time for destructive criticism is past; the Jubilee of the Modern Churchmen's Union marks the completion of that necessary task. Now it is the duty of all to collaborate in the re-presentation of the Christian essentials in the light of modern knowledge and in language which the ordinary man can understand. Archaic terminology must go, if it obscures or distorts the inner meaning.

(2) The boldest use must be made of the official recognition of the individual rights of freedom of thought, research and conscience. This is the fruit of the labours of the stalwart pioneers of the Modernist Movement within the Church of England. Properly applied, it gives the turning movement necessary to outflank the bastions of fundamentalism with its demands for blind adherence to outmoded dogmas. These are the critical obstructions on the road to general recognition of the true status and nature of Christianity. Thinking men must be free to exercise their private right of judgment on the particular issues — the critical point is acceptance of the broad principle that God is active in and through the world and that the life of Christ was a unique focus of that activity.

(3) The third point is a natural development of (1) and (2). If Christianity be so re-presented and left to the individual conscience for interpretation and acceptance, it follows that such

action must give a clear approach to the highly necessary advent of *Federation* of the Churches who are prepared to break loose from *fundamentalism*. It is increasingly and convincingly urged by Modernist speakers that Modernism in its very nature offers a special means for such federation, without impairment of the invaluable qualities of the individual Churches with their respective organization, methods and procedures. Federation is possible outside the Roman Catholic Church; without such federation there can be little hope of general public recognition of the validity of Christian claims. In short, we must unite the Christian family if it is to perform its task. That can be done without regimenting, frustrating or humiliating any of its members. Rather it should mean new and expanding life for each and all.

(4) Finally, Modernism must not lose its essential character which makes it what it can be potentially for the future of Christianity. It must not seek the function of evangelism — still less must it indulge in 'emotional thinking.' Its task is to be the leaven of sober liberal thought which will permeate the lump of ecclesiastical enterprise. It can contribute greatly to the re-establishment of Christianity as the spiritual power of humanity; on that turns the future and the destiny of the race.

ANGLICANISM IN AUSTRALIAN LIFE*

By Kenneth Henderson, M.A., Supervisor of Religious Broadcasts, Australian Broadcasting Commission

FAILURE in the field of reunion and fellowship must be charged against the various Christian denominations in Australia, but the size, prestige and geographical distribution of the Church of England in Australia gave her the initiative.

It does not fall to me to discuss reunion here in detail. I am sure that the fundamental problem is pride. There can be no recovery of Christian leadership in Australian life until we can overcome disunion. We could all clear away an immense obstacle to our message if we could get more visible fraternity and co-operation among ourselves. Cannot we all make up our minds to go to the utmost limit of Christian fellowship that our convictions permit, working and praying together, till our conception of loyalty to Christ forbids us going further? Then we shall see how far that

*An address delivered to an assembly of Australian clergy at Canberra under the presidency of the Bishop of Goulburn.

is. We must show that in the New Testament sense we love one another even though we cannot agree in matters dogmatic and ecclesiastical. We of the Church of England in Australia can afford not to worry about prestige. Even we with our 'three religions under one roof' are smaller than we need be spiritually because of our divisions. Other ecclesiastical communities have gifts that we should be the better for cultivating. And the Free Churches have urgent need of us.

We have failed liturgically. Our incomparable liturgy has become for most of us something like a Buddhist prayer wheel. It is intensely precious and lovely to many of those who have grown up with it. But it can be a kind of spiritual escapism. The Prayer Book raises for us no troublesome issues of the modern world. It challenges us with no sharp and urgent call to stand for Christ's presence in the field of politics and industry. It gives our people no chance of putting the common pains of to-day into common prayer. The remaking of the liturgy is a great field for Anglican pioneering in Australia. Lately I have come across some good liturgical work by Free Churchmen.

The difficulty is that the people who are left to us are the conservatives, who want 'the mixture as before.' Yet if the Church is to advance we must minister to the people who are not there.

Another failure of Australian Anglicanism is that we have never caught up with the Industrial Revolution. We have failed to win as practising members of our Church the industrial population of our great cities. I think I can see four reasons for this failure. Our liturgy has something to do with it. Its restraint, its use of Hebrew scripture, its indirect approach to life give it more appeal to those who have received more and better education than the factory worker. Secondly, the predominance of the middle class in our membership has perhaps damped down the preaching of the social gospel. Thirdly, among the workers dogmatic Marxism has had a great deal to do directly and indirectly in creating a wall of prejudice against religion.

The Marxist charge against us is twofold — first, that of using religion to defend the economic interests of the possessing classes; second, that religion makes us 'take our eye off the ball,' *i.e.* lift our heads off the job of improving this world in order to look up in our aspiration for another. Still I think the Marxist charge was truer yesterday than it is to-day. The sources of exploitation have somewhat shifted with the rise of Labour to political and industrial supremacy. Yesterday the Christian conscience spoke from the Left. Now it has an obligation to speak from the Right, *i.e.* it

must pronounce judgment on the laying of 300 bricks a day while people starve for houses.

The fourth reason why Australian Anglicanism has lost its factory folk is due to the lack of spiritual fellowship. To begin by recognizing that we are a class Church is the first step in abolishing our limitations. To-day there is great need for renewing the Church as an underlying fellowship throughout the world of labour. Under whatever system—capitalism, communism or mixed —industry must be hierarchical, power being graded downwards from the commissaire or general manager to the office boy and greaser. Only religion, a sense of sharing in an experience below the physical facts, will maintain fellowship. For we are in the age of pressure groups—an era of workers combining interlocked skills to earn a common income. Any group may make demands on the whole national income. Any group by striking and jamming the works may make the cost of refusing its demands greater than the cost of paying them. That is, I believe, to-day's and to-morrow's form of class war. Underlying fellowship with a realism stronger than the realism of economic struggle is ours to supply. So with the nations. We have to supply as Christians the sympathetic and imaginative energy that is loving at long range, the new characteristic Christian task of our age.

Let us begin recovery by recognizing that we have failed in these ways : We have lost our nerve because we have lost our faith in the inspiration of the present. Religion and the Church have become a specialized, separated interest and life. The Church is self-consciously trying to convert people to the Church rather than to the Way. We have lost the creative mind. We have to recover lost intellectual prestige by intellectual honesty. We have to transcend our class Church limitations and make a fellowship underlying the facts of class and international conflict. Pride has blocked our leading effectively in the direction of reunion. Liturgically we have used our incomparable liturgy to soothe us rather than inspire us.

In this country of ours, because of our numbers, prestige, equipment, doctrinal and historical position, the *lead* is with Anglicanism. But at present the *initiative* rests with the individual for making moves that later the Church must decide whether or not to adopt, reject or amend. The trouble is that every great historical tradition—church, medical association, law society, trade union movement—is controlled by its Pharisees, using the term to describe the men of tradition, order and detail. Pharisees have their uses, but they do sit on the heads of the prophets.

Toynbee's thesis on the survival of civilizations insists that every civilization in the course of its history encounters a set of circumstances or conditions that make a life or death crisis. It may be soil erosion, military invasion, economic crises or other external ordeal. But the higher the civilization the more likely is the crisis to be internal and spiritual. If the civilization can produce the constructive and creative answer to the crisis, it attains a new lease of life on a higher level. If it does not, the civilization collapses.

So it must be with our beloved Church. Here in Australia the life and death crisis is upon us. The call is to get beyond the self-consciousness of a self-absorbed body and achieve national self-expression. This crisis offers a series of opportunities and calls all to a life in which the transplanted Church of England may become the nucleus of a real Church of Australia. Before us is not a clearly perceived ready-made programme, but the problem of radical originality and creative energy — an appreciation of possibilities and the significance of times and seasons, faith, vision, competence in detail, persistence, skill in using all our resources and opportunities, including broadcasting, the press, the arts, and above all our varied educational systems. This renewal of contact with life is not a one man's job even though he be a prophet. It is rather one for corporate prophecy. It is for each one of us in fear and trembling to go forward on the front of his special competence, no matter how cold the feet. The test of belief in the Holy Spirit is our capacity to do things in cold blood. Your knees may knock as long as your teeth do not chatter. But each of us is being faithful only so far as he is making his own Churchmanship something more and other than the Church of England as it is to-day.

Only through a period of successive experiments can we bring any development to fruition. We must hold on to that glorious but uncomfortable faith in the Holy Spirit Who is calling us to use our frustrated heritage in the creating of what we do not yet clearly envisage and therefore do not yet specifically want.

THE CHRISTIAN GOSPEL AND CHINESE CIVILIZATION

By a Chinese Missionary

I. The Ancient World Outlook of the Chinese

BEFORE the impact of Western thought, the world outlook of the Chinese was a self-contained whole. It was a combination of diverse elements derived from different philosophies and religious conceptions—sometimes inconsistent, sometimes complementary—not systematized, but harmonized and integrated in one common outlook, which was embodied in a social and political framework derived from it. The chief elements may be considered under the following heads:

First, with regard to *Nature*. The most important concept in Chinese thought is that of the *Tao*. Although conceived in different ways by different schools of thought, it is present in one form or another in them all.

For the Taoists, who derive from it their name, it is impersonal but spiritual. It is the invisible, inaudible, intangible, inexpressible Something that 'rolls through all things.' It may be called by them the 'Nothing'; but only in the sense of being No-thing; nothing that can be expressed in relative terms. Nature and the Universe are the outcome of Its working. Although in the Taoist philosophy agnostically, and even atheistically, expressed, it is in reality a religious conception.

This is the source of the mystic appreciation of Nature by the Chinese, expressed in their poetry and in their landscape paintings. The Chinese people, from the peasant to the sage, have a profound sense of Something beyond the range of human thought, forever at work through the whole creation. There is Something there: Something moving, living, pulsing, lasting. In their poems and paintings they seek to express not so much the outward forms of things, as the Spirit vibrating in them.

By the Confucianists It is conceived ethically, and almost personally: It is the Eternal Right, that is the essence of Reality. And even the Taoists, who refuse to describe It in the relative terms of human morality, do in effect conceive It as the Perfect Goodness that transcends all human standards and distinctions; forever, like water, seeking the lowest place, and forever overcoming the hardest rock. The Chinese not only have this deep

sense of Something Eternal behind the passing forms of time and space, but also a deep sense of its Eternal Rightness and Goodness; a conception that is ethical as well as religious.

A more materialistic conception, and one that has played the part of a scientific theory in China, is that of the *Yin* and the *Yang*, the two Nature-principles or positive and negative Modes through which the *Tao* is thought to act. The Chinese, impressed by the rhythm of things — summer and winter, day and night, life and death, good and evil, male and female, light and darkness — conceived of this as the outcome of two alternating Nature-principles or Modes of the *Tao* — the *Yin* and the *Yang* — to whose interaction all phenomena are due. Although suggestive, it was a false concept — the phenomena of day and night, for instance, are due not to the alternation of two principles of light and darkness, but to the rotation of the Earth on its own axis — and retarded the development of true science by the experimental method.

There was a time in the eleventh and twelfth centuries A.D. when China appeared to be on the verge of discovering the experimental method. This was when the Neo-Confucians of the Sung dynasty emphasized the principle of 'the investigation of things' as the foundation of knowledge. They utilized a phrase of obscure meaning which they found in one of the ancient classical books, and they interpreted it to mean the investigation of all external phenomena. Instead however of proceeding by the inductive method to investigate the phenomena presented by Nature, they reverted to the data provided by the ancient books, and treated deductively the concepts of the *Yin* and the *Yang*.

Another school of Neo-Confucians, especially developed in the fifteenth century, challenged the interpretation 'investigation of things' and took the ancient phrase to mean 'rectification of one's actions' — 'rectification of one's actions (in a moral sense) is the foundation of knowledge' — giving a wholly ethical and subjective interpretation in place of an intellectual and objective one. The result was a school of Neo-Confucianism, admirable in its intense moral earnestness, but far removed from the inductive studies of Natural Science. In the hands of the Masters, this ethical teaching was a burning religious faith; but in the hands of the followers it became scholastic and literary, while it left the field of Natural Science open to the astrologer, the alchemist and the charlatan.

Second, with regard to *Man*. Chinese thought, following the lead of the Confucianists, particularly Mencius and the Neo-Confucians, insists on the Ethical make-up of human nature. This no doubt is the chief contribution of Chinese thought to the

world; man is an Ethical being; the Moral Consciousness is deeply rooted in his nature; Ethical standards are absolute; the Moral Law is supreme in the Universe and in Man; the cultivation of moral character is the fundamental duty and goal of life, not in isolation of the individual, but in all his social relationships.

The family is the unit of society. Every individual is a member of a family, stretching far back into the past in the persons of the ancestors, and forward into the future in the persons of the descendants. He is related by appropriate duties to each member in the family series. Of these the supreme duty is that of filial piety —love and care for parents while they are alive, and continuance of their work and wishes, combined with ceremonial attention to their spirits, when they are dead. All other duties spring from these, each in its proper degree. This is the ethical significance of Ancestor Worship.

The State is a divine institution, established for the good of the people. It should be an embodiment of the Ethical principles of the Universe. The ideal ruler is the Sage — the man who, embodying the Moral Law, rules by example and moral influence, rather than by law and force; he is the father and mother of his people; and the quality demanded in the people is loyalty and faithfulness. But the will of the people is the voice of God. The authority of a government only lasts so long as it discharges its duty to the people. In the last resort, the will of the people — not arbitrarily and irresponsibly aroused, but as the expression of the Moral Law of the Universe — is the sanction for the government of a state. It is democracy, not as an organized institution for which the machinery is lacking, but potential and ethical, and in many ways effectual.

The World is a great family, for human nature is the same the world over, and all men are brothers. Wealth is contentment. War is a crime. The true nobility is noble human character, 'the nobility of Heaven.'

Not only backward to the past, as is commonly supposed, do the Chinese people look, but forward to the future — to the 'Universal Peace,' and to the 'Great Community,' as they like to call it, when human affairs being rightly ordered, will react in turn upon the course of Nature.

Third, with regard to *Salvation*. The Ethico-political system of the Chinese, outlined above, was adopted in the second century B.C. as the basis of education and government, and became embodied in the institutions of the one great Han dynasty (206 B.C. to A.D. 220). But human nature being what it is, the system broke

down, and there followed the four hundred years of chaos of the Chinese Middle Ages, from the third to the sixth centuries A.D. It can be compared with the breakdown of the Roman Empire and the Dark Ages in Europe. Only in China the breakdown was not so complete nor the darkness so dense.

Barbarian tribes conquered and overran North China, and set up short-lived dynasties in rapid succession; while Chinese rule was preserved in the South and Chinese civilization continued to pervade the North. But the Ethical and political system of Confucianism had broken down. The ideal state had failed to be achieved upon Earth. There was a craving for 'Salvation.' Other-worldliness attracted the thoughts of men. Taoism came to the fore, with its recluses and the search for the Elixir of Life. But above all Buddhism — the religion of Salvation from India — captivated men's minds. For six hundred years (third century to ninth century) Buddhism became the dominant religion in China, and played a part comparable to that of the Papal Church in Europe during the Middle Ages. Men really believed. It was China's Age of Faith.

China's spiritual ideas were deepened and enriched by Buddhist mysticism, Buddhist contemplation and Buddhist piety and devotion. But many Buddhist ideas, such as the transmigration of souls, and the Buddhist cosmogony of millions of universes and millions of aeons of time through which souls pass to their final liberation, though grafted into Chinese thought, were never really synthesized with it. There they remain to-day — foreign elements in the great amalgam of China's spiritual heritage; emphasizing and reinforcing the ethical and spiritual side of the Chinese world outlook, but part of a different system from the rest.

In particular, the Buddhist conception of Salvation was essentially Release from Suffering; which for the Buddhist means release from personal existence. All particular existences, including that of the individual soul, are represented as Illusion. Salvation consists in recognizing the illusory nature of individual and personal life, and of all that relates to it. Although its attainment commences with the discharge of homely duties, it must be consummated in the monk's life of meditation and abstraction, in complete withdrawal from the world and its affairs. This was directly contrary to the Confucian ethical, social and political ideal.

But the world was in confusion, and Buddhism promised Salvation to the individual from the troubles of life by a mental and moral discipline which would destroy all attachment to individual

existence and to the external world. For six hundred years this path was followed, and was found to be in vain.

The great Neo-Confucian revival commenced in the eleventh century, and Buddhism, found wanting by men who had studied it, was rejected. Buddhism, they said, is 'Empty,' and destructive of the foundations of society. By which they meant that by teaching the unreality of the individual self and of the external world Buddhism had made void the Moral Consciousness in the heart, and the ethical relationships upon which society is based. Confucianism on the other hand, they said, by emphasizing the reality of the Moral Consciousness in the individual heart, and the reality of the world of personal relationships, was 'solid learning,' based upon real understanding of the true nature of the Universe and Man and establishing the true principles of human life.

So Buddhism was rejected by the best minds of China, upon whom, however, its spiritual and philosophic influence was very deep. It has remained in China to the present day, and is now undergoing something of a revival. It has become an integral part of Chinese civilization; and is still sometimes spoken of as the real religion of the Chinese. But it has never recovered the position it once had.

Fourth, the age of *Scepticism*. We have seen that there was failure of all systems in China to give complete satisfaction. The Age of Faith and Conviction gave place to an age of external conformity to traditional rites and usages, but with inner agnosticism and scepticism. The robust ethical faith and practical effort of Confucianism itself became conventional and literary. To this perhaps is due the apathy and stagnation that has characterized the Chinese during the last few centuries, and that has brought the past into such bad repute with the modern generation.

II. The Disintegrating Influence of Western Thought

Into this self-contained but somewhat disillusioned world came the solvent of Western thought.

First, in the sphere of *Natural Science*. Natural science, in the modern sense of the word, came to China with the introduction from the West of the inductive and experimental method. The *Yin-Yang* theory was destroyed and the ancient cosmogony collapsed. It gave a new view of Nature. It gave man control over Nature and revolutionized life. It ushered in Materialism in place of the ancient Spiritual and Ethical view of the Universe.

Second, in the sphere of *Ethics, Social and Political Science*. It undermined the ancient convictions—the Ethical make-up of human nature and the absolute authority of the moral sense. It disrupted the ancient family system and social ethics, and overthrew the autocratic and patriarchal form of government. It introduced the 'small family' system, with freedom of the individual and the emancipation of women, and the secular and nationalist State. It made several unsuccessful attempts to establish democracy in a modern way.

Third, it introduced great changes in *Economics*. It exalted commerce in place of agriculture; international trade and foreign goods in preference to domestic productions; and led for some to a great rise in the standard of living, and an increasing distance between rich and poor. It led to changed values: it emphasized multiplication instead of reduction of wants; it honoured wealth instead of character.

It advocated industrialization; factories sprang up; mines were opened; and in their wake followed the rapid growth of city populations; the break-up of the apprenticeship system; and the deterioration of morality. Electric light enabled longer hours of work. Easier communications increased the habit and range of travel, with its widening experiences. Cinemas and wireless brought new knowledge to the remotest parts.

Fourth, in *Religion*. It regarded religion as an outworn superstition; it fostered atheism, agnosticism and materialism. In particular, the Confucian ethics were regarded as an obstacle to progress and were discarded or ignored.

Christianity, coming with the prestige of the religion of the civilized world, also shook belief in the ancient Chinese faiths, and sometimes took their place. But, for the most part, that place was left vacant until Communism came, supplying the place of religious faith and idealism for many of the young, and in open hostility to the ancient faiths and morality, and to the ancient family, social and political systems.

III. The Gospel Message to China

The Gospel came to China with Western civilization. But we must distinguish clearly between the two. The Gospel is *not* Western civilization; and its function is not to substitute one civilization for another. It is a principle of life infused into a civilization; and it can be infused into an Eastern as well as into a Western civilization. Therefore the Gospel does not come to China to supplant Chinese civilization, but to put new life into it.

and to give it new meaning; to counteract the disintegrating action of Western materialism and to effect a new synthesis.

First, in respect of *Ancient Thought and Institutions*. It sets God's seal upon all that is true in the ancient thought and good in the ancient institutions; especially the ethical emphasis of Confucianism, and all that is derived from it, for the family and political life. As against the disintegrating tendency of modern thought, it confirms the absolute character of the Moral Consciousness in the heart of man, and of the Moral Law in the Universe.

It reinterprets Chinese thought, spiritualizing and personalizing it, and bringing out its latent theistic implications. Some would say that to reinterpret is to distort, and is unjustifiable. But, as has been indicated above, philosophic thought in China is not static; it has in fact been reinterpreted continuously through the ages. And necessarily so; for it is not a closed system, but consists largely of seed-thoughts, the full meaning of which is not seen at once but becomes increasingly apparent, with growing richness, as the experience of the race advances. It needs to be interpreted in the light of the highest expressions of truth, not of the lowest. It may fairly be maintained that its fullest meaning is brought out in Christian thought. In particular, the great ethical truths of Confucianism only have full meaning for a world in which persons are of infinite and eternal value, and in which God is thought of as personal. Even the impersonal thought of Taoism and Buddhism only makes sense when expressed in personal terms.

Further, the Gospel gives by the Cross the power to break the bonds of sin and stem the tide of corruption; and it infuses new life through the Holy Spirit and communion with God. The virile ethical faith of Confucius has been transformed through the ages into pedantic book-work and empty talk, until for Young China it has become the symbol of conservatism and old fogeyism. More than once it has been rejuvenated for a time; more than once the forces of corruption have fastened upon it. It is in the ever-young, ever-renewing life of the Christian, in fellowship with God, that the ethical ideals of the great Confucians, and the mystic yearnings of the Taoists and Buddhists too, find their realization.

The Gospel gives an alternative to the disrupting and disintegrating tendency of sceptical and materialistic Western thought. Western thought has come to China to stay, and if it is only of the sceptical and materialistic type it will destroy the old foundations of life and provide nothing with which to replace them. The Gospel gives a spiritual and ethical valuation of man and the universe which can be expressed in terms of modern thought and

synthesized with it. It recognizes in particular the danger facing China's youth, and their moral and spiritual needs. It offers the Kingdom of God instead of Marxian Communism as their personal, social and political ideal.

Thus the Gospel offers a third alternative. Based upon the Fatherhood of God, it creates the Christian family. It also creates a new form of corporate life, the Church, the inspiration and nurse of the new social and political organism coming into being. Its ideal of Christian fellowship tempers industry and commerce, counteracting the false values of greed. By striving to transcend racial and national barriers it creates new international relationships, and fulfils the universal dreams of ancient China.

F. S. Drake.

THE HISTORICAL ELEMENT IN CHRISTIANITY

By S. G. F. Brandon, M.A., D.D., C.F.

I

THE publication of Professor O. Cullmann's study entitled *Christus und die Zeit. Die urchristliche Zeit—und Gesichts—auffassung* (*Zuerich 1946*) adds an important contribution to a subject which is clearly forcing itself more and more upon the attention of both theologians and philosophers. Although the idea of a philosophy of history rarely fails to draw forth from the professional scholar some scathing piece of condemnation, it is evident from the stream of works commencing (to go no further back) with that of Spengler and numbering those of Toynbee, Mumford, Berdyaev, Collingwood, Kahler, Heard and Oakeley, that in the problem of the meaning of history many thoughtful persons are finding an increasing interest and concern.

The problem must ever continue to be one of peculiar urgency, but it is likely that the conditions of life during the last four decades have caused that urgency to become extraordinarily accentuated. These conditions may briefly be described as twofold. Primarily the tremendous upheaval of human affairs, which the two world wars have occasioned, has forced upon even the most unreflective urgent questions about the meaning of life, both individually and socially. The old sanctions and accepted ways have been overthrown or denigrated, while the future offers vistas of awful possibilities, and so men look with new, if sometimes wistful, eyes upon the past of their race in an endeavour to find

there some guiding plan or purpose. Then with this kaleidoscopic state of human institutions there has gone a disturbingly rapid expansion of knowledge about mankind's past. The spade of the archaeologist has not only brought to light civilizations which were hitherto completely unknown, but it has also been instrumental in pushing back the horizons of history into a past which was unsuspected by most scholars of a century ago.

The task of digesting the amorphous mass of historical data which research is ever increasing and of apprehending its significance may well be deemed a feat beyond the power of any one mind, even when it is as encyclopaedic and as lucid as that of Professor A. J. Toynbee. It would rather seem that the most which may be achieved is some collaborative synthesis such as that attempted by the French *savants* in their great series of studies under the title of *L'Evolution de L'Humanité*, or a co-ordinated presentation of the facts and their accepted interpretation as the Cambridge *Histories* provide.

The consequence of all this for Christianity is enormous, and it may fairly be asked whether the fact has yet been sufficiently appreciated by Christian thinkers. Professor Cullmann does indeed seem to feel something of the challenge in that he clearly recognizes, and also boldly emphasizes, the essentiality of the historical element in the faith. He notes that implicit in the Christian claim is not only the assumption that the advent of Christ marked an important new era in the historical series, but that it did itself constitute the key to the understanding of all history and the touchstone by which it is judged (*Sie besagt vielmehr, dass von jener Mitte aus die ganze Geschichte zu verstehen und zu beurteilen ist*). He readily acknowledges that the Christianity which finds expression in the New Testament documents does not concern itself directly with secular history, but takes over the Old Testament interpretation of history (*Heilsgeschichte*), with its claim to provide the *rationale* of the whole time series (*die sich allerdings auch als zusammenhaengende Geschichte, nicht als Summe von Geschichten darstellt*). That this *Heilsgeschichte* is the *Herzpunkt* of all New Testament theology is a truth which, he believes, is generally more clearly apprehended by non-Christian thinkers than by Christian, and he goes on to maintain that the rejection of Christianity because of its identification with this *Heilsgeschichte* is based upon a truer grasp of essentials than is the presentation of a Christianity which is divorced from its peculiar historical ethos . . . of a Christianity of which '*seines Lebensnerv naemlich des "Aergernisses" der Heilsgeschichte entledigt ist.*'

However, although thus frankly admitting this extraordinary claim of Christianity, like so many other Christian scholars, Professor Cullmann avoids facing the real issue of proving it against the challenge of modern historical knowledge by referring slightingly to the demands of the 'mere historian' (*'Nurhistoriker'*) and by invoking the essentiality of the theological problem involved in the Biblical theory of history. Hence he removes, for his consideration, the problem from the forum of secular study into the insulated halls of academic theology, citing in justification the very close bond between Christian history and revelation.

Accepting this insulation, Professor Cullmann's subsequent treatment of the subject is interesting and *in se* valuable. He does for example clearly bring out the fundamental difference between the original Christian concept of Time as a progressive series and the cyclic idea of Hellenic thought, which later came to make its influence so felt in the Church. He writes:

> 'Das Symbol der Zeit fuer das Urchristentum wie fuer das biblische Judentum und die iranische Religion die *aufsteigende Linie* ist, waehrend es im Hellenismus der Kreis ist.'

And between the original Christian and the Hellenic concepts, he maintains, there can be no effective equation. The Christian view of Time as a progressive series of events had been adopted from Judaism, but important modifications had been made. The Present (*die Gegenwart*) had come to acquire a special significance as being the time between the Resurrection of Christ and His Parousia, while the dual events of His Death and Resurrection constituted the decisive middle term of the whole process of divine revelation (*Offenbarungslinie*).

Such an analysis of the original Christian attitude towards Time has, of course, its value, but to seek to turn the modern attack upon the Christian interpretation of history by arguing that the truth of that interpretation can alone be known by divine revelation is to assume a position which, though it may be inviolable in logic, is quite irrelevant to the interests of historical truth. It is like Professor C. H. Dodd's 'realized eschatology' theory, in that it claims to discern a certain series of temporal events as constituting the unique interpretative pattern of the whole historical process, but at once avoids the obvious question of how this unique character is to be discerned by invoking the inscrutable purpose of God, which is beyond History.

Attempts such as these to exalt Christianity as the historical religion *par excellence*, while refusing to grapple with the real problems which such an extraordinary claim involves, may well cause the suspicion to arise in many minds that such a claim can-

not be substantiated in the open forum of historical enquiry. In short, if Christianity claims that a certain set of alleged historical events are of key importance for the understanding of the whole history of mankind, it must be prepared first to prove the historicity of these events in terms of the accepted technique of historical demonstration and, secondly, to show that these events have such a supremely unique significance. This is a truly tremendous task, it must be agreed, but it is one which is exactly commensurate to the extraordinary nature of the claim made.

Whether this formidable challenge will be fairly faced by a Christian theologian, or rather perhaps by the collaborative effort of a number of suitably equipped theologians, is an issue which must be awaited with deep interest, for in a very real sense herein lies the greatest and most crucial test for Christian *apologia*. In the meantime, however, it is useful to note something of the proportions of the task.

II

In the first place an accepted definition of what a historical religion, or the historical element in religion, means must be achieved. It is a remarkable fact that in the only relevant English monograph, namely, Professor C. C. J. Webb's *The Historical Element in Religion* (Lewis Fry Lectures, 1934) no consistent definition is given. The following passages may be cited as describing two aspects of the subject which Professor Webb considered to be especially important:

> (1) 'What I understand by the historical element in religion is the tradition of the past of a religious community which is associated in the minds of its members with their sense of sharing in its life.'
>
> (2) 'When dates are assigned to the occurrence of the events related in the tales, and an attempt is made to synchronize them with events related in the tales handed down by others, we have the beginnings of history in the proper sense; but this history only becomes an element in religion when belief in it comes to be regarded as the justification for the ritual act, the institution of which it is invoked to explain.'

It is evident then from these two definitions alone of Professor Webb that the concept of the historical element in religion is made to cover series of data of two quite different orders. But this is not all, for when the references of other writers to the subject are carefully examined a great vagueness of definition is found to prevail, and often it would seem that the concept is meant to describe something again quite different, namely, the fact of the adoption of a definitive philosophy of history.

Without going further into analysis, it would appear then that there are at least three different forms under which the historical

element in religion may be conceived. There is that set forth in the first quotation from Professor Webb above, which may be conveniently described under the title of *Tradition.* The second quotation concerns a very important aspect, but does not provide an adequate statement thereof. Professor Webb here draws attention exclusively to the aetiology of ritual; but far more important as an effective factor in religion is the attempt, primitive both in its origin and inspiration, whereby the efficacy of some past event is made available in the present by magical simulation in ritual; this function of the historical element in religion we may term *The Ritual Perpetuation of the Past.* A third way in which the historical element may express itself in religion is, as we have just noticed, under the form of a philosophy or interpretation of history.

III

In Christianity the historical element has clearly a twofold expression, namely, under the form of a philosophy of history and as an instance of the *Ritual Perpetuation of the Past.*

Christianity, owing to its Jewish origin, came naturally to take over that interpretation of history which is set forth in the Old Testament, particularly in the Hexateuch. This interpretation is essentially *Heilsgeschichte,* and in its completed form it constituted a conspectus of history from the Creation down, possibly, to the fulfilment of Yahweh's promise to Abram in the establishment of the Davidic Kingdom, and with further ramifications traced out in later works. As such it is essentially a tendentious presentation of diverse material, including myth, legend, folklore and poetry, in the interests of Yahwist nationalism, and it has, moreover, clearly passed through various stages of evolution.

Of the original kernel of this *Heilsgeschichte* it is fascinating to speculate. Possibly it is to be found in some primitive liturgy used at a kind of Semitic amphictyonic festival at which the Israelite tribes periodically celebrated their allegiance to their common war-god, Yahweh,[1] and *Deut.* xxvi, 5 sq. is perhaps a surviving fragment of the liturgy.[2] The liturgy would have contained a recitation of the *Heilstaten* of Yahweh, particularly the stirring events of the deliverance from Egypt and the settlement in Palestine, and herein possibly lay the beginnings of the Hebrew interest in history. The solemn recitations of such mighty deeds at a festival of common allegiance could not but serve to associate

[1] cf. Noth, M., *Das System der Zwölf Stämme Israels* (Stuttgart,, 1930); Sellin, E., *Geschichte des Volkes Israel,* Band I, p. 101.

[2] cf. von Rad, G., *Das formgeschichtliche Probleme des Hexateuchs* (Stuttgart, 1938), pp. 4, 51.

Yahweh in the minds of his devotees with effective action on the stage of human history, and so, especially when the Yahweh party sought to hold the various Hebrew tribes to their allegiance, it was inevitable that an appeal was made to what was thought to be the evidence of history.

To trace how around this original kernel there gradually grew that veritable philosophy of history which is enshrined in the canonical Hebrew literature and reflected in almost every subsequent Jewish apocryphal and pseudepigraphical writing is a task of crucial importance, as well as one of very great interest. Preeminent among the contributive factors of this development is the work of that writer (or literary school) who is usually designated the Yahwist or J. The part played by this writer (for to personal genius alone can the following achievement surely be due) in fusing together into a consequent narrative the Patriarchal Sagas of the various Hebrew tribes, the *récits étiologiques, juridique, étymologique* and *explicatifs cultuels* which Professor A. Lods distinguishes,[3] and the national legend of the Exodus and Settlement is crucial. Moreover by prefacing these episodes with the *Primaeval History*, a composition of ancient Semitic myth and folklore, there was achieved a presentation of the majestic theme of Israel's unique destiny from the very creation of the world.

In the achievement of the fundamental pattern of this *Heilsgeschichte* and in its consequent influence is to be found the key to the tragic destiny of Israel as a nation and to the confident attitude of Christianity to History. For believing in a god who had once in the mighty past so signally manifested his providence for his chosen people, the Jews were impelled, as their worldly fortunes worsened, to project their hopes into a future in which their faith in their national deity would be gloriously vindicated to the discomfort of their Gentile oppressors. The terrible fruits of this philosophy of history were reaped by those generations who in the rebellions of A.D. 66-72 and 135 immolated themselves in challenging the right of heathen Rome to rule the holy land of Yahweh's ancient promise.

To the first Christians, being Jews by race, this *Heilsgeschichte* set a problem of peculiar urgency. In *Romans* ix-xi Paul is found wrestling with it. The point at issue was the reconciling of faith in Yahweh's providence for Israel with the plain fact that the larger part of the nation remained absolutely obdurate to the appeal of the Gospel. Paul epitomizes the dilemma in the question: '*I say then, Hath God cast away his people?*' The solution which he finds was destined to have the most profound effect on

[3] *Israël, Des Origines au milieu du viii^e siècle* (Paris, 1932), pp. 175-7.

subsequent Christian thought. Invoking the old prophetic idea of a godly remnant of the nation representing the true Israel, Paul succeeded in transferring to Christianity, as its true inheritance, the Jewish philosophy of history which was enshrined in their canonical scriptures. Henceforth, then, Christianity was enabled to shed any original consciousness it may have had of being a novel movement, and instead it could proudly regard itself as constituting the fulfilment of the agelong providence of God. It has been Professor Cullmann's task to trace the elaborations of this idea in the various New Testament documents and show how the essential pattern of the Christian *Weltanschauung* was achieved whereby the whole course of history is viewed as a progressive drama of the unfolding of the divine plan for mankind's salvation, the focal point being the incarnation of the Son of God when Caesar Augustus ruled the Roman world.

IV

The other aspect of the historical element in Christianity, which we have designated *The Ritual Perpetuation of the Past*, involves the survey of a wider field of evidence. A start may indeed well be made in the preliterary period when the significance of such a painting as that of the celebrated masked dancer in the cave of Trois Frères (Ariège) is considered. The original purpose of this picture is a matter for speculation, but there can be little doubt that in thus portraying what was surely a ritual dance it was hoped that thereby the efficacy of the original act could be perpetuated in time. However that may be, the evidence of the operation of such a motive is certain when the ritual of the Osirian mysteries is examined, even in the earliest phase depicted in the *Pyramid Texts* and the *Shabako Stone*.[4] Therein it is seen that the sacred history of the passion of Osiris was ritually re-enacted both at certain festivals and in mortuary rites for individual persons. In the latter in particular certain experiences, which, it was believed, Osiris had undergone, were ritually simulated on behalf of the deceased in the expectation that the efficacy of the original events could thus be evoked across the ages to benefit the devotee in the present. To varying degrees and in different ways the other mystery faiths of the Ancient World similarly sought by ritual

[4] Black basalt, British Museum, No. 797. cf. Sethe, K., *Dramatischen Texte zu altägyptischen Mysterienspiegeln, I. Das 'Denkmal memphitischer Theologie,' der Schabakostein des Britischen Museums (Untersuchungen zur Geschichte und Altertumskunde Ägyptens,* Band X., Leipzig, 1928); Budge, E. A. W., *From Fetish to God in Ancient Egypt* (Oxford, 1934), pp 263-4; Breasted, J. H., *The Dawn of Conscience* (New York), pp. 30-1.

means to perpetuate the potency of the saving acts recorded in the sacred histories of their deities.

The extent to which Christian thought and ritual conformed to this ancient and widespread idea appears to be obvious. We may select for brief comment the two basic rites of the Church as depicted in the New Testament. According to Paul (*Rom.* vi, 3 sq.) baptism is an act of ritual simulation to the death of Christ, *so that we were buried therefore with him through baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life.* The idea of the ritual perpetuation of the past is even clearer in the Eucharist.[5] In this rite not only was a dramatic representation essayed of the traditional Last Supper, but the sacrifice of the Saviour was visually depicted in the broken bread and the outpoured wine, and it was believed that so potent was this ritual simulation that physical harm would result from careless participation therein. (*I Cor.* xi, 27-30.)

V

It may conceivably be objected that, although a distinctive philosophy of history and a kind of *Ritual Perpetuation of the Past* are certainly important manifestations of the historical element in Christianity, they are but manifestations and not the thing itself. The historical element in Christianity, so the argument would continue, is to be found essentially in the appeal made to the historicity of the events recorded in the Gospel narrative as constituting its credentials of authority.

But this appeal was made relatively late and, except for the dubious story of the Jewish authorities' handling of the guard's report about the Empty Tomb in *Matt.* xxvii, 11-15, no evidence of its use, or even appreciation of its value, is to be found in the New Testament. At the most *Luke* does attempt some synchronization of the sacred story with secular history; an attempt which by its notorious inaccuracies is eloquent of the author's ignorance both of the chronology of the origins of the faith and of the course of recent Palestinian affairs. More characteristic of the general attitude in this matter of the New Testament writers and of those of the sub-Apostolic period is the statement of Paul in *II Cor.* v, 16: 'Wherefore we henceforth know no man after the flesh; even though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now we know him so no more.' Certainly in the writings of Paul, in the *Epistle to the Hebrews*, in the Johannine and Petrine Epistles, and in the

[5] cf. James, E. O., *Christian Myth and Ritual* (London, 1937), pp. 127 sq., *The Labyrinth* (*Sources of Christian Ritual*), pp. 239 sq. (London, 1935).

Apocalypse there is no evidence of any essential emphasis being laid upon the historicity of the crucial events of the Gospel; indeed those documents have generally the same atmosphere of timelessness in their references to Jesus as is found in the ἱεροὶ λόγοι of the mystery religions.

VI

Such then is something of the proportions of the problem which confronts the philosopher, who would understand in what sense Christianity may be considered a historical religion, or the theologian, who would undertake the defence of the traditional historical claims of the faith against the criticism of the modern student of history. For the latter indeed the problem is both serious and urgent. Orthodox Christian doctrine claims to expound a revelation of divine providence which is demonstrated in past history and which holds the key to mankind's destiny as it develops from the present into the future. It is a noble claim, but it is a bold one too; for it provokes the challenge to enter the forum of historical investigation and there to prove its case in accordance with the canons of judgment which all must abide who profess to value historical truth.

LOISY'S *LA NAISSANCE DU CHRISTIANISME*

By the Editor

THE publication by the Hibbert Trustees of the English translation made by Dr. L. P. Jacks of Alfred Loisy's *La Naissance du Christianisme*,[1] published in 1933, will doubtless tempt those who have read *The Rise of Christianity* by the Bishop of Birmingham to compare the critical conclusions of the Bishop and the Abbé.

We shall here attempt no such comparison, but may remark that the pastures into which the Bishop leads his flock of readers provide more spiritual and moral nourishment than the somewhat arid plains traversed by the Modernist French scholar. Both are unflinching truth-seekers and truth-speakers, but for the Abbé the origin and development of the Catholic Church is the supreme

[1] *The Birth of the Christian Religion* by Alfred Loisy; English Translation by Dr. L. P. Jacks. (Allen & Unwin, 1948; 18/-.)

interest whereas the Bishop's supreme interest is the Personality and Gospel of Jesus Christ.

The main themes of Loisy's volume are the Sources of the Canonical Gospels and some of their Apocryphal rivals, the Mission and Gospel of Jesus, the basis of the belief in His Christhood, the Apostolic propaganda, foundation and development of the Christian Church, its triumph over Jewish opposition, Gnostic heresies and Imperial pagan suppression.

An extremely interesting feature of Dr. Jacks' translation is the Preface contributed by Dr. Gilbert Murray. He writes:

> 'M. Loisy's analysis of the books of the New Testament and other early Christian literature surpasses, in my opinion, any previous analysis known to me. He writes with an intimate understanding of the problems before him which seems to me to shed a new, and I would almost add a convincing, light on one of the most important movements in human history. I only hesitate to use the word "convincing" because, as he himself emphatically warns us, the evidence itself often leads only to a doubt or at most to a strong probability.' (p. 5 f.)

Dr. Gilbert Murray's high praise, combined with extreme caution, reminds us of Dr. Sanday's comment on Mark's account of the Feeding of the Five Thousand: 'I accept all Mark's facts as literally true except the statement that "they were filled."'

Readers who have not been serious students of the origins of Christianity arrived at by our critical, and in some cases uncritical, scholars during the last hundred years may feel disappointed with the lack of precise and positive solutions reached by Loisy on a number of very interesting and highly controversial issues. If, however, they only knew more of the negative achievements of our Christ-myth critics and our Form-critics they would stand amazed at Loisy's moderation. At least for Loisy, Jesus is a historic personality. With sardonic humour Loisy writes:

> 'The author of this book makes humble avowal of not having yet discovered that Jesus never existed. The conjectures by which some among us, in these latter days, would explain the Christian religion without Him whom that religion regards as its founder have always seemed to him as fragile as they are vociferous. These conjectures come, for the most part, from persons who have arrived somewhat late at the problem of Jesus, and not all of whom have prepared for that problem by deep study of the history of Israel's religion or of the Christian. For them the non-existence of Jesus forms part of a philosophical system, except where it proceeds from polemical interest avowed or discreetly veiled.' (p. 10.)

Loisy's conclusion as to the historicity of Jesus is more fully presented in his chapter on the Gospel of Jesus. There he writes:

> 'Though myth and legend have considerable place in evangelical tradition, our knowledge of Jesus is somewhat fuller than of John the Baptist.

> But all the mythical and legendary elaboration within the tradition bears testimony, in its own way, to Him from whom the Christian movement had its beginning. Whatever may have been said to the contrary, there is not a single Christian document of the first age which does not imply the historicity of Jesus. The gnostic Docetists who denied the materiality of Christ's body and the physical reality of His Passion believed, with the mass of Christians, in the historicity of Jesus and of His appearance as a figure upon the earth; their Christ, immaterial but visible, was not for them an unreal phantom, a pure image of the mind, as our mythologues would sometimes make Him out to have been. And pagan writers least favourable to the Christian religion, from Tacitus to Celsus and the Emperor Julian, always regarded Jesus as an historical figure. . . .' (p. 68 f.)

We have to confess, however, that there are a number of other issues in which Loisy appears to us to be needlessly negative and sceptical. We are unable here to argue the issues: we are restricted to noting some of them with brief comments.

For instance, Loisy dismisses Bethlehem as the birthplace of Jesus. For this he produces sound critical reasons; but when he rejects Nazareth as the birthplace of Jesus he produces only the flimsiest of arguments to justify his negation. He argues that Jesus was born somewhere in Galilee and thinks it was probably in the region of Capernaum, 'north-west of the lake of Tiberias.'

Renan, in *La Vie de Jésus*, decisively states that Jesus was born at Nazareth, and gives in a footnote about a dozen references to support his conclusion. The birthplace issue is perhaps a minor one, but it is very different in the case of the record of the teaching of Jesus. Here we find Loisy's sceptical negative dogmatism equally unconvincing. He writes:

> 'Of what the teaching of Jesus was in reality only an approximate idea can be formed from the teaching that has been attributed to Him. It may be said without a trace of paradox that of the teaching He actually gave no collection was ever made. Neither the preacher nor His most faithful hearers dreamed of fixing the tenor of His preaching for the purpose of transmitting it to posterity; . . .
>
> 'Our Gospels, even the Synoptics, are more truly understood as containing the elements of the primitive Christian catechism than as representing instructions really given by Jesus in Galilee and Jerusalem. . . . It is safe to say that the teaching of the first three Gospels is conceived after the manner of Jesus and directly penetrated by His Spirit. But no attempt could be more futile than that which aims to-day at reconstituting the teaching of the Christ by arranging, in an order more or less logical, the discourses and sayings scattered throughout the first three Gospels. . . . These discourses are constructs designed for the Christian communities, with a view to their needs, their misgivings, their sufferings, their interior difficulties, their position in the pagan world and their controversies with the Jews. It may be that the general principles of this teaching were laid down by Jesus, or merely foreshadowed by Him. But,

> in all strictness of language, the teaching of the discourses and sayings called evangelical are one thing, and the personal preaching of Jesus was another.' (p. 72 f.)

We would maintain against this that there is a quality of style, as well as of content, in many of the sayings attributed to Jesus by the Synoptists which justify us in regarding them as original sayings of Jesus. 'Never man spake as this man,' 'He speaketh with authority and not as do the scribes,' are testimonies recorded by the Synoptists, and certainly some of the sayings they record justify this valuation. What parallel have we to these sayings in the rest of the New Testament books except — and this is significant — in the Epistle attributed to James, the Lord's brother? There is nothing like them in the Apocryphal Gospels. The collection of *Agrapha* — sayings attributed to Jesus found outside the four Gospels — is so small as to indicate emphatically the extreme difficulty that faced the primitive Christian teacher in coining sayings of Jesus.

On the other hand, we are ready to admit — what, by the way, is not definitely stated by Loisy — that a number of the sayings of John the Baptist may have got included quite naturally as sayings of Jesus in the Synoptic Gospels, and that important regulations of the Primitive Christian Church in, for instance, the Charge to the Twelve and to the Seventy may have been inserted into the Synoptics as reflecting contemporary Church practice and thus giving to them an authority which could only be theirs if they were accepted as being the utterances of Jesus Himself.

Loisy rejects as historical the statement of Papias that St. Matthew made a collection of the sayings of the Lord in Aramaic and is unable to find any convincing reason for the Church describing the 'First Gospel' as 'according to Matthew.' But is there not still something to be said for that Gospel being so described because it contained a Greek version of the sayings of Jesus made by Matthew? Furthermore, Streeter was at some pains to point out that in Judaism it was not customary to write the lives of the great Rabbis but to make collections of their Golden Sayings. Why should not this have been done in the case of Jesus?

If the belief in an imminent apocalyptic crisis did not prevent strenuous Christian propaganda, was it not necessary that the propagandist in his preaching should include, not only the acts of the Lord's ministry, but also His most striking sayings?

We find Loisy's treatment of the extension of the Christian Church and the development of its doctrine, rites and discipline of more positive value and interest than his treatment of the actual

mission of Jesus. We believe we do M. Loisy no injustice when we assert that for him it is the Catholic Church which is the supreme religious reality in human history and not Jesus Christ. Hence he has been charged by one of the most acute of his English critics with compressing the Catholic Church into the manger at Bethlehem. Be that as it may, Jesus is for him the *fons et origo* of the Christian religion. Loisy is convinced that Jesus regarded Himself as in a unique degree the Envoy of the Kingdom of God and that, however we interpret it, the Kingdom of God and its ultimate triumph over all human opposition was the very core of the Gospel of Jesus.

Loisy is convinced that Jesus, in addition to being an itinerant prophet and more than a prophet, was also an exorcist healer and that His apostles followed His example and combined exorcist healing with their propagandist preaching.

Dr. Jacks in translating and publishing this treatise has done a useful service for English readers by indicating how far it is possible for negative criticism of our traditional Christian records to venture without becoming palpably absurd. From the publication of the revolutionary theories of F. C. Baur of Tübingen (1792-1860) down to Alfred Loisy's *La Naissance du Christianisme* in 1933 we have passed from the *terminus a quo* to the *terminus ad quem* of the literary and historical criticism of the origin of Primitive Christianity. Its results have not only been disturbing and destructive, exasperating and exaggerated, but they have also been illuminative and liberating, and have helped those who have studied them with open minds and balanced judgment to realize what are the supreme values of the Religion of Jesus and what are its necessarily temporal elements which can be discarded, we will not say without loss, but with positive gain to its essentially spiritual, moral and universal quality.

BOOK REVIEWS

A ROBUST SUPERSTITION *

It is natural that people should desire to know the future, and in the absence of rational means, should adopt irrational means of finding it out. Hence the popularity of astrology to-day. The editors of popular newspapers, well aware of the tastes of their *clientèle*, think it well worth while, in days of newsprint stringency, to run an astrological column, if only for their women readers. A detailed study of the extent and nature of astrological belief among ordinary people conducted by 'Mass-observation' in 1941, revealed that nearly two-thirds of our adult population glance at or read some astrological feature more or less regularly, though the degree of belief or interest may vary. The quality of the belief is naturally confused and superficial, and Press astrology, which includes personal advice as well as more direct prophecy, is so varied that the reader can graduate his dose of rubbish. Total devotees of the cult are said to be somewhat rare, but genuine fanaticism does exist.

But though the once royal art has fallen upon evil days and become a charlatans' playground, for whole millennia it enjoyed a notable prestige and was valued by kings, adventurers and learned men. What destroyed it finally (except as an amusement for the intellectually destitute) was the modern science of astronomy—though Galileo drew a horoscope (promising long life to a Duke who died in a few weeks) and Kepler retained a belief in the art.

Astrology was, of course, closely bound up with, and a more or less natural product of, ideas about the nature and movements of the heavenly bodies which were current at the time. Many of these notions appear to us quite fantastic. We cannot imagine, for example, that when the sun or a star rises or sets it is born and dies. If we did so believe, it might naturally follow that a new-born child might share the qualities of a new-born star. The study of the heavens would seem first to have had a utilitarian motive, it aided navigation and enabled a star-clock and star-calendar to be developed. Already in the third millennium B.C. a science of the heavens had been elaborated both in Mesopotamia and in Egypt. There was much patient and valuable observation even though theories may have been, in our eyes, childish enough. The periods of the various planets were carefully observed, measured and calculated, and modern Assyriologists have succeeded in deciphering and understanding completely the cuneiform texts concerning Babylonian and Assyrian star-lore.

Dr. Eisler's volume is a storehouse of curious information which can hardly have been collected before. One learns about the 'Houses' of the sky, about solar and lunar 'influences,' about the theory of the 'Great Year,' about the eight-fold division of the celestial planisphere, and many other abstruse matters, the exposition clarified with reproductions of ancient prints and diagrams. Those interested in the vagaries of the human mind will find in this volume a rich feast.

Dr. Eisler has no difficulty in showing that the theories of the heavens upon which traditional astrology was based have been radically altered by modern astronomical science, and now seem entirely fantastic. Indeed a book of this sort, if it does nothing else, should arouse in the reader a feeling of thankfulness for at any rate the mental benefits which science has bestowed upon us. It is, after all, a great thing, as Lucretius said, *rerum cognoscere causas*. Dr. Eisler tells us how,

'Ignorant of the aetiology of bubonic plague, the Paris College of

* *The Royal Art of Astrology*, by Robert Eisler, Ph.D., D.Sc., D.Litt. (Robert Joseph. 18/-.)

Physicians attributed the Black Death of 1349 to a persistent fog caused by a struggle of the constellations combating the rays of the sun, and to a violent battle between the warmth of the heavenly fire with the waters of the great sea, which would continue to spread so long as the sun should be in *Leo*.'

There was a time when regular chairs for astrology were established at the universities of Padua, Bologna, Salamanca and Paris. Merton College, Oxford was a famous centre of 'iatro-mathematical'—*i.e.* astrologico-medical—studies, and heads of Oxford Colleges were not above employing the services of an astrologer to discover the whereabouts of a fugitive student who was 'wanted.'

The labour involved in compiling this volume must have been stupendous; but the work once done, will not need to be done again. This book is an achievement of the first order. Perhaps Dr. Eisler is too much concerned to refute and expose the absurdities of our modern astrological quacks. Surely, to quote Gibbon, to triumph over such adversaries is itself a humiliation!

In this volume only one thing is lacking—an index. J.C.H.

THE LONDON SYLLABUS OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION*

This syllabus of Religious Instruction is published in accordance with the requirements of the Butler Education Act of 1944 which enacts that in all Government-supported schools there must be an opening act of worship to the daily session, that religious instruction must be part of the curriculum and that such teaching would be inspected in exactly the same way as other subjects. This is very striking since it makes it quite clear that the Christian view of life is fundamental to our teaching and must occupy an important place in all our schools.

The situation as far as religious instruction is concerned has altered considerably since the Balfour Act of 1902, which gave rate aid to the voluntary schools and caused the most bitter religious controversy ever known in the history of education in this country. The Passive Resisters, under Dr. Clifford, roused the Nonconformists against this State subvention for the Church Schools which, if left without this aid, would have died out entirely in the course of a few years. The Balfour Act was the occasion rather than the cause for this violent outburst of feeling against the Church, the privileged position of which was and had been hotly resented for many decades by the Nonconformists. The gap between the two was never wider nor the antagonism more intense than it was in 1902.

Although the quarrel was over the schools it was not in the schools. It was, as it were, professional. But though it was between the leaders outside, it was none the less damaging to the pupils inside the schools, for they were being starved spiritually. Those most intimately in touch with education and more nearly responsible for the work in the schools began to demand a secular solution to the problem. In 1904 Sir Robert Morant laid down very clearly the aims of education for teachers in elementary schools without mentioning the word religion or scripture, and yet he asserted that the purpose of education was to form and strengthen character. Since that time the various consultative committees that have been appointed have all stressed the importance of religious knowledge, notably that on the Education of the Adolescent 1927, and that on the Primary School 1931, both under the chairmanship of Sir Henry Hadow. In the Spens Report we have full consideration given to the subject of scripture in secondary schools.

The 1927 committee commends the Cambridge and the West Riding of

* *The London Syllabus of Religious Instruction* (London County Council. Price 5/-).

Yorkshire Syllabuses to the attention of the schools, while the committee of 1931 refers to the teaching of religion as being at the heart of all teaching. 'An education which leaves this instinct without acknowledgment must be defective, starving a child in the most important side of its nature. The aim has been to give instruction in the Christian Faith as a living thing with power over daily life.' The Spens Report dealt with the Government-aided secondary schools in which generally speaking religious knowledge had not been treated seriously. As pupils were to be withdrawn at the age of eleven-plus from the primary schools and given secondary education, the question of religious teaching became urgent. The Spens Report made scripture an integral part of the school syllabus and by recommending the appointment of specialist teachers its status as a school subject was raised.

We had travelled very far along the road of agreement even before the war broke out and this better feeling between the Free Churches and the Established Church now finds fuller expression in the latest Syllabus of Religious Education. The curriculum in school naturally reflects the ideals and the character of the community of which it forms part. It is not a body independent of the rest, pursuing its private aims, remote from the normal stream of life. This great development in religious teaching undoubtedly reflects the best thought of the time. The Church itself has a very practical reason for participating in these schemes of religious education, for she is no longer able to bear the financial burdens which the maintenance of the Church schools imposes upon her. The record of decline is a melancholy one, and yet it is inevitable. Of the 23,000 schools in England in 1858, 19,559 were Anglican according to the Newcastle Report quoted by Dr. Braley. In 1903 there were 11,700 Church schools, while in 1938, out of a total of 22,000 schools 8,478 were Church schools and of these 425 were on the black list as being unsuited for teaching purposes. Most of these schools are now primary and are likely in the course of time, not very long hence, to be condemned.

As the fixed aim of English education has been, from Locke to Arnold, the building up of character, and as the best moral conduct follows from the acceptance of Christian ideals, the English people, always very practical, realize that the moral damages of war must be repaired in the school. It is obvious that the quality of our goods and the character of our administration reflect the ethical standards which we have acquired in our school career. Too great an emphasis therefore cannot be laid on this aspect of our education. There is the wider aspect, too, namely that peace in the world depends on the religious belief in the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. For these reasons it seems we must come to terms on this question of religious teaching in schools if we are to survive.

Few people recognize the magnitude of the movement which is at the moment taking place in the schools. It lies outside the churches though it has their blessing. If the teachers co-operate and realize the aims of the representative bodies which have drawn up the syllabuses then England once more will not only be a Bible reading but also a Bible understanding nation. This London Syllabus was drawn up by a committee including representatives of the Church of England and other denominations, as well as representatives of the Teachers' Associations and the London County Council Education Authority. The Introduction is written by the Lord Bishop of Bristol, and the liberal note which it strikes, gives us at once the character of what follows. The Bishop has been in close touch with the Training Colleges and knows the temper and the mood of those who will be the agents through whom alone the committee can get the results they desire. He recognizes that rules or narrow doctrinal teaching is not possible in the free questioning

atmosphere of the classroom. The Bishop accepts the benefits that have followed from the researches of scholars and points out the need for teachers to become acquainted with them. The liberty of the teacher is respected in the note preceding the syllabus.

It must be stated at the outset that the purpose of the syllabus is to lay before the teacher an agreed scheme for the basis of his Christian teaching together with a body of material which may help and guide him in his studies and in preparation for classroom teaching. It cannot be overstressed that the syllabus is planned to be suggestive rather than compulsory and that a slavish adherence to the contents in their entirety will defeat its own ends and will be contrary to the spirit in which it has been written. There is, of course, a conscience clause for teachers, but the school would be severely handicapped in this matter of religious teaching if the head teacher was not a Christian or if an undue proportion of the staff were not. Reports have been made of the opening act of worship in London schools being carried out with no member of the staff present. As religious teaching is not restricted to the hour set apart for instruction but influences the whole working of the school, it is clear that the Government's aim cannot be realized when such conditions exist. A recent report of Harvard University quoted by Dr. Maxwell Garnett stated that those schools were most successful, judged from any angle, which had a uniform philosophic background. Can we get that uniform background in the nation's schools?

The London Syllabus then covers the various stages of school life from the nursery school through the kindergarten and primary to the secondary. The passages from the Bible are carefully selected and adapted, of course, to the psychological needs of the infant and the adolescent. This is not difficult, for the Bible has, as Augustine wrote, 'pools at which lambs may drink and depths in which elephants must swim.' Thus the syllabus passes from stories about children and suitable for children to history, to incidents and episodes, and to a study of individual characters; but the whole is presented as a process of growth which continues in every part of the world at the present time. Discussion is encouraged and critical powers developed; it is necessary that the teacher should be familiar with the Modernist point of view, for it is fairly certain that he will be unable to find general acceptance for any other.

The general impression one gets in reading this syllabus is that it is admirable in the suggestions it makes, in the subject matter it presents, and in the methods it advocates for imparting the knowledge and building up the right sort of Christian character. But the question one must ask is, can teachers be found sufficiently well qualified, not only intellectually but in every other way, to reach this high level and so realize the aims here laid down. When the same care and attention is bestowed upon religious education as has been given to physical education during the past twenty years, then the object envisaged by the compilers of this syllabus may be realized. We have concentrated on correcting the deficiencies and defects revealed by the first world war when Lloyd George described us as a C3 nation as far as physical health was concerned. We have passed Health Acts, tried to clear away slums, provided midday school meals and free milk. We have given great attention to physical training and generally reduced the mental strain on children. Now the recent war has revealed or perhaps created serious defects of a moral character as is shown by a great increase in juvenile delinquency and in serious crime. Unless we make Christian teaching the basis of our educational work there is little hope of rebuilding the national character and there is a danger of school activities degenerating into a system of bread and games.

L. FORSTER.

GOD, MAN AND THE ABSOLUTE*

All those who yearn for a Christian synthesis of contemporary thought, and who look for a union of 'true religion' and 'sound learning,' will take up this book with keen anticipation. For it endeavours to lay the foundations of such a union and synthesis, and to do so in terms of a modified neo-Hegelianism. The author recognizes that the names of Green, Caird, F. H. Bradley, and Bosanquet do not now raise the philosophical enthusiasm they once did; and that the 'Liberalism' which was the Christian outcome, is nowadays more often a term of abuse rather than commendation. But he believes that from the wreck he can salvage all the best materials from the once proud ship, and construct a vessel more worthy than its predecessor, and certainly more able to withstand the critical gales of contemporary philosophy. How far is he successful?

To answer that question, let us first make a broad survey of the book. Chapters I and II outline 'a theory as to the fundamental structure of Reality' which is considered 'to follow inevitably from the two premises that (*a*) all being is experienced being; (*b*) Reality, or being-as-a-whole, is a systematic unity' (p. 60). It is, in fact, an Absolutism. Chapter III examines the adequacy of this outlook to the claims of the moral life; Chapter IV struggles with the concept of human freedom, and prefers a Kantian approach to the traditional Hegelian outlook—though it is a Kant interpreted against the background of an Absolutist epistemology. The difficulties of dealing with the concept of freedom, especially in so far as it is considered to involve reference to the 'timeless,' raise the question as to how adequately we shall ever discuss such fundamental philosophical problems, and the next Chapter (V) is very pertinently devoted to a theory of error. Chapter VI rounds off the general discussion with a few final and brief considerations of the 'contrast between finite and Absolute experience,' and in Chapter VII the relation of the Absolutism here set forward to Christian theism is discussed with special reference to immortality, the soul, and sin.

Now in the main there have been three objections commonly brought against the Hegelian synthesis: (i) that it compromised finite individuality by absorbing the individual into some supra-personal Absolute; (ii) that it has never satisfactorily explained error and evil, or for that matter, time itself in relation to the eternal, and altogether 'perfect,' Absolute; (iii) that, from the Christian point of view, it did not do justice to the historical element in the Christian Faith, nor to its gospel of redemption. How, now, does the book fare in regard to these three points?

(i) The author puts up a determined fight for the individual, and I think it is fair to say that he argues very plausibly (and more plausibly than most Hegelians) for the permanence of the individual *in his sense* in the Absolute. Right at the end of the book he asserts again: 'The finite beings are, as we insisted, not merged or lost in the Absolute' (p. 139). On page 54, however, he has preserved a wise caution: 'We do not profess to see how all this is done.' Altogether, he puts up a good case for the identity-in-difference principle—he argues fairly, and clears away some of those confusions of the past that depended on the 'puns, metaphors and ambiguities' of the older Idealists. Yet I am not a little troubled by the way in which, right from the outset, 'mind' (almost synonymous with cognition) is taken as an ultimate category, and further because the unity of experience, which I am sure was the tremendous truth enshrined in Hegelianism, is only gained at the expense of its duality. For both these points were the least sea-worthy portions of the Hegelian ship. And to those who see in Descartes (as, in a way, does

* *God, Man and the Absolute*, by F. H. Cleobury. (Hutchinson. pp. 150. 15/-.)

the author) one of the disasters of modern philosophy, it is a little distressing to find special pleading for him in regard to the *Cogito* (p. 33).

(ii) In the matter of the moral life, and evil and error, the book seems to me less strong. I agree with the author that Absolutist ethics because of their emphasis on the individual-in-community have always been infinitely more satisfactory than the 'individualist' ethics of a J. S. Mill. But on page 83 we read: 'An essential feature of Absolutism is its treatment of evil and error as negative rather than positive, as being the *absence* of richer experience. 'Can that be an *adequate* account of *all* evil? If so, why redemption? In the discussion of divine impassibility (p. 59) the writer might be nominally orthodox, but is he in fact able to predicate seriously 'redeeming love' as an attribute of God? Is the 'sympathy' of which the writer speaks, the sympathy of the sufferings of Christ, or the 'sympathy' by which we become partakers at once of His sufferings and of His glory? It is unfortunate for the author's main position that he should so easily give this impression of being (what I am sure he does not mean to be) over-facile about the moral life, as also *e.g.* in the comment on 'happiness' and Mr. C. S. Lewis (p. 70) and in talking of 'an entirely constructive attitude' we must take 'towards the evil-doer' (p. 105). 'Attitude' is surely too objective and 'rational' in its associations? We are, indeed, back in the old moral sparseness of the Hegelians, though *e.g.* a remark on suffering (in criticism of Bosanquet—p. 85) would suggest that the author is well aware of this common Idealist deficiency.

In the matter of error, I agree that some of it is to be defined in terms of 'incompleteness' (p. 111); and I further agree that Bradley's denial of relations is only properly interpreted as the author interprets him on page 129 (an interpretation which most of Bradley's enemies miss); but is *ALL* error incompleteness? The mistake of the Hegelians was to take too simple and naïve a view of the facts, and I am not sure that the author has profited sufficiently from their mistakes.

In the matter of freedom, he rightly rejects the traditional Absolutist view (see especially pp. 88, 89) and gives a careful account of his interpretation of Kant in terms of 'intervention.' 'Kant's idea is much more profound [*i.e.* than the traditional Absolutist]; it is that as timeless ego (not as empirical ego) I can, *though I need not*, introduce into the causal series a new and essentially unpredictable *factor*' (p. 94). Again (p. 95): 'the momentary intervention has, of course, permanent effects on the future workings of the system. If there were no further intervention it would go on for ever as a closed causal system, but although the *law* of the system would remain unaffected by the intervention the collocations, so to speak, would remain permanently different from what they would have been without the intervention.' Clearly the phrases 'of course' and 'so to speak' indicate the difficulties, and I would have liked to see a much more detailed account of what the permanent differences are. They are certainly ethical—but I would like to see the point much more adequately analysed.

The great trouble is, so it seems to me, that Will has always been a stumbling-block for the Absolutist who has taken cognition as primary (see the conclusion of (i) above) and despite the wide use of 'Reason' suggested on page 147. If only the Absolutist would shake off his inordinate affection for Mind, take a unity-in-duality as fundamental, and introduce a 'timeless self,' not as on page 96 *et seq.*, not itself acting *à la* Kant, but as also an 'abstraction' from an active unity—the result might be more happy.

(iii) On this point the writer scarcely touches. True, he is keen to show himself a defender of the faith, and deals adequately with some of the more superficial objections to the Absolutist position. His discussion of 'soul' should make many Traditionalists (if they read so far) sit up and take notice.

But I am still not sure that the book takes into account all the degradation and brutality that in fact there is in the universe.

Yet even that is not the most serious point. There is no space here to go into the fundamental weakness of Absolute Idealism in relation to the Christian Faith, but any who care to follow the matter further will find a detailed discussion in the article by J. S. Boys Smith in *The Modern Churchman* of September, 1941. The ultimate question is: Can the Hegelian philosophy of history be satisfactory for the Christian? Not many would answer 'yes'—but the present book does not discuss the question at all. The only reference to history is, I believe, on page 98, and not very pertinent for this question at that. This would be no serious criticism of the book if it were merely an exposition of a modified Idealism, but if the book claims to be 'a study of the bearing of philosophy on Christian theism' (sub-title) it is surely a serious omission.

Yet the book is more honest, more cautious, and clearer minded than traditional accounts of Absolutism. It is a good piece of philosophizing and is written in a style which bespeaks sincerity of purpose and generosity of judgment. But whether the result is ultimately any more favourable for the Christian Faith than some of its predecessors I must leave for the reader to decide.

IAN T. RAMSEY

RELIGIOUS REMINISCENCES OF A JOURNALIST*

Mr. Arthur Porritt, a Lancashire man, a loyal Free Churchman, an ardent social democrat, a Fleet Street journalist who became Editor of *The Christian World*, has just produced his second volume of reminiscences—*More and More of Memories*. They constitute pleasant reading, for Mr. Porritt is a reasonable optimist and has a firm faith in the ultimate triumph of the Kingdom of God in human history. He records the best in his fellow-human beings and does not think their delinquencies worth mentioning. Last, but not least, he has a keen sense of humour and preserves among his reminiscences a number of good stories. At the head of the collection we place the following:—

Dr. Glover, the Cambridge scholar, who had been granted permission by the Yale University authorities to curtail his lecture course and return to England for personal reasons, was petitioned by Dr. Buchman of the Oxford Groups to come to Washington and address a Group conference before leaving for England.

> 'I have sought guidance on this matter,' said Dr. Buchman, 'and God assures me that you can go to the Washington Conference with an easy conscience.' 'No,' replied Glover, 'that won't do for me, Buchman. My God is a gentleman, and I am *not* going to Washington.'

Mr. Porritt records his relations with a long succession of Prime Ministers, but it is his religious, not his political reminiscences which constitute the real value of his autobiography. Yet, those who know their England know that any separation between religion and politics is false and artificial. Not a few of our most eminent statesmen have been among the most religious of our fellow-countrymen. It is doubtful if the last hundred years has produced a Christian apologist equal to A. J. Balfour or a more influential religious personality than W. E. Gladstone.

Arthur Porritt was born into a religious home. The account of the splendid work done by his Congregationalist father, a mechanical engineer, in his

* *More and More of Memories*, by Arthur Porritt. (Allen and Unwin. 1948. 12/6.)

adult Bible classes indicates what English religion and morality owe to such lay service. Looking back on his home, the head of which never earned more than £2 a week, his son declares: Given my choice for a second spell of life I would choose no other home. We must add that his mother, who had been brought up in the Church of England, was as remarkable as his father.

The most outstanding of religious personalities among the author's intimates was undoubtedly Wilfrid Grenfell, the Schweitzer of Labrador. He cites a very interesting passage from one of Grenfell's letters dealing with pacifism.

> 'I am no nearer agreement with Orchard on the Pacifist question. I cannot see beyond the instinct to resist oppression . . . It is a time when it is folly to be wise. It seems to me a supreme sacrifice to take human life—to a thinking man it is a higher sacrifice than giving life away, and I think largely so because I cannot see how one could escape being hardened. But still I saw Christ at the butt end (of the rifle) and see Him there now from 1914-1918.' (p. 141.)

Like Schweitzer, a devoted Christian missionary, Grenfell was like Schweitzer, a Christological Agnostic. He wrote to Arthur Porritt as follows:

> 'As you know, I made up my mind that the only way to make this planet worth living on was to follow the Christ, whether we understood His relationship to God or not. What He asked us to do was to follow Him, not to understand Him anyway, and men increasingly read what we do rather than what we think.' (p. 143.)
>
> 'I am an optimist, and that is the way I am going to end. The Kingdom of Christ is coming, I am sure. The very fact that the "world is in an uproar" is only to be expected, until that time comes when man loves his brother as himself, and I know of no other agency for that but Christianity . . . If it does not become a world of brotherhood under the Fatherhood of God, I see no other use for it to carry on at all.' (p. 145.)

Next in eminence in religious intimates comes C. F. Andrews, a Cambridge scholar, an Anglican missionary in India. He was inspired to become a Christian interdenominationalist by the following experience.

> 'When a Baptist missionary fell ill Charlie Andrews offered to conduct the Sunday services in the Baptist Mission Chapel. His Bishop forbade him to do so, and threatened to inhibit him if he persisted. Andrews kept his promise to preach for the Baptist brother, and then sent his resignation from the Anglican Church to the Bishop. Thenceforward, he was an interdenominationalist.' (p. 163.)

Andrews' book, *What I Owe to Christ*, written some years later, became a best seller.

Bernard Manning, Fellow of Jesus College, Cambridge, a most uncompromising nonconformist, was another of Mr. Porritt's religious intimates. When Manning, at a congregational conference at Cambridge, declared that he would not sit down at the Lord's table with any holder of Modernist views on the Person of Christ, the Editor of *The Christian World* dared to question 'whether it might not further the cause of Christian unity and charity if the Communion service were suspended for twenty years.'

We conclude this review of the memoirs of a religious journalist with another of his good stories.

> 'When Frank Harris, an overbearing publicist, declared in Mr. Balfour's presence that "Christianity and Journalism were the curses of the age," Mr. Balfour, with cutting irony, quietly said, "Christianity, of course, but why Journalism?".' (p. 123.)

H.D.A.M.

THE CHRISTIAN ANSWER*

The Christian Answer is the product of a theological discussion group in America, and is directed primarily, though not exclusively, 'to thoughtful men and women who stand somewhat outside the Christian tradition, and yet are moved by the events of our time to inquire whether Christian faith may not hold truth and power which they have neglected and of which they and their world stand in need.'

Dr. Paul Tillich, who contributes the first essay on 'The World Situation,' was in the first batch of distinguished German scholars to be ousted from their chairs in the German Universities by Hitler. His analysis of the present situation and the causes that have led up to it is penetrating.

The guiding principle of the period when modern society first emerged from absolutism both political and religious was *belief in reason*, which meant not so much the process of reasoning as 'the power of truth and justice embodied in man as man.' It was held that the liberation of reason in every person would lead to the realization of a universal humanity and to a system of harmony between individuals and society. This view of reason, which made it much more akin to the divine *logos* of the Stoics than to the manipulation of technical skill, was displaced by a view which regarded it primarily as a tool in a new system of production and exchange of material goods.

'The transformation of *revolutionary reason* into *technical reason* was the decisive feature of the transition from the first to the second period of modern society.' Thus technical intelligence replaced humanist reason. The former provides means for ends, but supplies no guidance in the choice of ends. Thus a common spiritual purpose was lost, and in consequence the different forms of community disintegrated. Even the national community recovered reality only when attacked, and lost it again when danger passed.

> 'Bourgeois society in its second phase destroyed community because it destroyed any common foundation and any common purpose. The service of the mechanism of mass production is not a possible spiritual centre for community.... It is not based on a common idea but on the controlling economic and psychological necessity that each man subject himself to the mechanism. Thus communities disintegrate into masses.'

The next stage was when the automatically dehumanized masses became *consciously* dehumanized groups. The attempt is made to re-establish community 'on the basis of anti-bourgeois doctrines through fighting groups fired by a fanatical will.'

Dr. Tillich's analysis deals primarily with the negative features of modern culture, its contradictions and aberrations. But he points out that any Christian answer to our difficulties must take into account also the positive contributions of the modern period.

> 'Here the principal point is the elevation of reason as the principle of truth above all forms of authoritarianism and obscurantism. This is a truly Christian issue even if it be fought out largely in humanist terms. Christian faith which proclaims Christ as "Logos" cannot reject reason as the principle of truth and justice.'

One of the satisfactory features of this volume throughout is that it is uninfected by *sauve qui peut* into neo-Calvinism characteristic of so much contemporary Protestant theology. The writers display a sturdy faith in

* *The Christian Answer*, by Paul J. Tillich, Theodore M. Greene, George F. Thomas, Edwin E. Aubrey and John Knox, with an Editorial Introduction by Henry P. Van Dusen and a Foreword by John Baillie, D.D. (Nisbet. 10/-.)

reason and scholarship, which is of good omen for religion in America. The transatlantic nerve is not failing.

Professor Greene's essay on 'Christianity and its Secular Alternatives' examines the respective attitudes of the Indifferentist, the Naturalist, and the Humanist. The first of these, if not reached by the Christian Church, is likely to be engulfed by some secular movement of a quasi-religious character like Communism or Fascism. With regard to the Naturalists Professor Greene notes one not infrequent characteristic, namely their invincible complacency, which prevents them from examining the Christian position with open-mindedness. Secular Humanism he deals with sympathetically, outlining a reasonable Christian faith which may be described as Christian Humanism.

Professor Thomas's essay on 'Central Christian Affirmations' is an extremely able piece of modern apologetic. As typical, we may quote a passage from his section entitled, 'Salvation by Faith and New Life in the Spirit.'

> 'Opposed to the humanist idea that we can *save ourselves* by our own reason, moral efforts, social reforms, scientific discoveries, cultural achievements, and economic and political efforts, is the Christian affirmation that we are saved *by God* through *faith*. . . .
>
> 'Regeneration brings about the liberation of the self from its paralysing egoism into creative and self-giving life. . . .
>
> 'St. Paul speaks of the new life of the Christian as lived "*in the spirit*" rather than the "*flesh*." This has sometimes been misunderstood. It does not mean primarily mastery by the reason, conceived as the higher self, over the lower self of animal appetite. This is the doctrine of Platonic dualism, not Christianity. St. Paul's emphasis is upon possession of the human spirit by the Spirit which was in Christ as the source of a new life raised above the level of natural human existence. In the Fourth Gospel, Jesus is represented as saying, 'That which is born of the flesh is flesh: and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." Clearly, this way of thinking of a rebirth "from above" is to be understood, not primarily in terms of the Platonic dualism between rational and irrational parts of the soul, but in terms of the Old Testament idea of the Divine Spirit which inspires or indwells the spirit of the prophet. Thus life "in the spirit" . . . is an "inspired" life, a life controlled "from above" by the Spirit of Christ or the Holy Spirit.'

The moral and cultural ideals of modern life fall short of the specifically Christian conception of personality. The dominant ideal of character to-day is that of the congenial, sociable, adjusted person who pleases everybody but lacks moral principles and spiritual depth; while the absence of any passion for perfection has left our culture shallow and vulgar.

A number of modern writers on Christianity seem to leave on one side what was certainly the central interest of the New Testament writers, namely immortality. Professor Thomas does not evade this question. Christians, he says,

> 'know that the hope for *eternal life* after death cannot be proved by reason. But in some form it seems to them to be required by what they know about the human spirit, by the worth of human personality, and by the love of God for His children. Even in the midst of time, they feel that eternal life is theirs; they can live for eternity here and now, because they have passed from death to life. Thus, they are not tempted to stake all their hopes on temporal goods or make exaggerated claims for the possibilities of history.'

Professor Knox, in his essay on 'Christianity and the Christian,' holds

that our moral impotence is the major cause of our present moral confusion. If we were able to do all that we see we ought to do, we should be able to see more clearly our whole duty. Our trouble does not lie in our ignorance of the divine decrees, which indeed are written in our hearts, but rather in the fact that we find obedience to them beyond our power. 'We cannot keep God's perfect law, and God is not willing to give us an imperfect one. We therefore try to devise one for ourselves; and in that attempt lies one major source of our confusion.'

Dr. Edwin E. Aubrey has some interesting things to say on 'Christianity and Society'; and indeed this valuable collection of essays well repays study, and reminds one of the kind of thing this country was able to produce after the 1914-18 war. American theologians at any rate are not in retreat, whatever may be the case over here. J.C.H.

ANGLICAN ORTHODOXY*

Dr. Hodgson's pamphlet on *The Doctrine of the Church as Held and Taught in the Church of England* consists of relevant extracts from the Articles, Prayer Book, and Canons; and an interpretation based upon them. Although Dr. Hodgson is responsible for this interpretation himself, he has had the assistance of six consultants — three evangelicals and three anglo-catholics — in order 'to make it an honest representation of what is held and taught in the Church as a whole' (p. 5).

So far as it is a purely factual statement of beliefs held, there is little room for criticism, but on one point modern churchmen will find themselves in disagreement with Dr. Hodgson, and that is on his estimate of modernism and its proper rôle within the Church.

> 'It may indeed be questioned,' he says, 'whether there is a place for modernism as a third "party" in the dialogue. It may be that the true function of the modernist is not to set a third doctrinal tradition beside those of the catholic and evangelical; it is to keep both catholic and evangelical mindful of their need to use genuinely scholarly methods in their search for guidance from Scripture' (p. 23).

That this last is a very important function of modernism, the modernist will heartily agree, but it cannot be allowed that the modernist has not inherited a distinct historical tradition. The liberal, or, as Dean Inge calls it, the Platonic, tradition in English religious thought undoubtedly has its place beside those of the catholic and evangelical; and although it is less sharply defined than either of them and has affinities with them both, that is no valid reason for questioning or overlooking its rightful existence.

D.L.S.

MAN IN EASTERN RELIGIONS*

> 'The decay of Christianity and Buddhism, as determinative influences in modern thought, is partly due to the fact that each religion has unduly sheltered itself from the other ... Instead of looking to each other for deeper meanings, they have remained self-satisfied and unfertilized.'

Thus the late Professor A. N. Whitehead; and Dr. Hilliard might almost have taken the passage as a text for his book. It has been said that Buddhism is a philosophy looking for a religion, and Christianity a religion looking for

* *The Doctrine of the Church as Held and Taught in the Church of England*, by Leonard Hodgson. (Blackwell. 1946. 1/6.)

* *Man in Eastern Religions*, by Frederick Hilliard, Ph.D., B.D. (Epworth Press. 5/-.)

a philosophy; but as Dr. Hilliard points out, the distinction between these two activities has never been so clearly marked in the East as it is in the West, possibly, we may suppose, because there is in the East no contrast drawn between Reason and Revelation.

Dr. Hilliard is primarily concerned with the doctrine of *Man* held by Eastern religions, and this is really the crucial point in any faith. With regard first to Hinduism,

> 'The weakness of the Hindu attitude to man lies in the fact that it fails to acknowledge that man is primarily a person and is content to regard him only as an aspect of ultimate Reality.'

But as against this it is here pointed out that the Hindu view does lay due emphasis upon the higher aspects of man's nature, insisting as it does that there is within man the eternal *Atman*, a kind of offshoot of the Divine; though it maintains also that man can never, by the unaided use of intellect and will, fully attain the final truth which is *Brahman*.

In contrast to this the history of Christian thought about man shows that it has generally been dominated by a belief in the essential weakness of human nature, in spite of the Old Testament belief that man was made in the divine image. Thus a balanced view has been lacking. One cannot but agree with Dr. Hilliard that

> 'One of the results of this one-sided emphasis upon the weaknesses of human nature can be seen in the rise of the extreme humanism of the nineteenth century.'

And as lack of balance in one direction generally leads to a reaction in another, we have the secular humanism of Swinburne and Shelley to thank for the recrudescence of Augustinian polemics in Barth. What we sorely need in the West is a balanced estimate of man, not ignoring his weaknesses nor yet over-emphasizing them, but recognizing that the divine image is there, however overlaid with foreign matter.

Passing on to Buddhism, Dr. Hilliard is inclined to agree with the late Mrs. Rhys Davids that the original view of man's nature held by Gautama himself was that man is always *in process of becoming*, instead of being a static entity. On this view the self is to be thought of as a principle of continuity which is constantly developing and so can never remain fixed. Thus the self is what man makes of himself and is the fruit of moral endeavour. Dr. Hilliard quotes Prof. W. R. Sorley:

> 'The self is a continual process of growth; its content expands and is modified, and its powers develop in this process.'

Thus 2,500 years ago a truth was grasped about the nature of man which the West is only now beginning to take into account, and

> 'a general acquaintance with Buddhist psychological analysis and its findings would take the West a long way toward attaining a truer and deeper perception of what is really implied in the fact of individuality and the notion of a self in man.'

Parsism, or Parseeism, traces its ancestry to the Zoroastrians of Persia, and holds that the path of struggle is the way of salvation; the conflict between good and evil in the human breast is the earthly counterpart of the celestial struggle between Ahriman and Ormuz. In this system free will is a reality and man has to look to no one but himself for his salvation. In contrast to orthodox Christian teaching about the need for divine grace, this doctrine might seem to present a startling *lacuna*. Yet we may agree with Dr. Hilliard that 'Parsism is, in one respect at any rate, a little nearer

to the probable truth than Christianity has generally been through its over-emphasis in the opposite direction.' At any rate the Parsi is left in no doubt about the fact 'that the path of the good life can be trodden only by the man who exerts himself to the limits of his power.'

We are not sure that Dr. Hilliard, passing to China, does full justice to Taoism, for while recognizing its influence among the Chinese for many centuries, he holds that we may pass it by 'as of little account for the life and thought of the West.' But one feels that a little of the quietism of this philosophy would do the West no harm. Moreover the conception of Tao is central in Chinese art. The artist looks for Tao in the object, tree or bamboo, that he proposes to paint, and contemplates it until its spirit enters into him so that he can convey it on to paper or silk with his brush. The Westerner, with his raw vandalism, and his attitude of irreverence towards Nature, could well do with a dose of Taoist culture. He would be less ready to exploit and despoil, and to obliterate beauty, wherever he sees it, for the sake of money—or out of sheer pleasure in destruction.

Dr. Hilliard stresses an important feature of *Mahayana* Buddhism, on which he has a separate chapter; enlightenment is not now the *end* but a beginning. The disciple chooses voluntarily to re-enter the cycle of rebirths so as to help others to attain the goal. He is now called a *Bodhisattva*—'the warrior who fights for others'—a kind of Suffering Servant. Thus *Nirvana* is found in *samsara* (the world of sense and change) in sacrifice for the sake of others' salvation. Nirvana, like heaven, represents an attempt to describe the consummation of man's earthly life. The teaching of Mahayana is that man's highest endeavour, instead of ending at physical death either in extinction or passivity, is carried onward towards unbounded opportunities of service forgetful of self. We shall agree that it would be hard to find a nobler vision of the hereafter. A fuller and more satisfying conception than the common Western idea of heaven has generally been able to supply.

With regard to Islam, though 'its actual doctrine of man as an individual falls, on the whole, below the level both of Judaism and of Christianity,' it

> 'This brotherhood is a thing to be seen and experienced. There is simply the plain fact that a Muslim in distress anywhere in the world will receive at least board and lodging, given without reluctance, in any Muslim home. It is as though the natural hospitality of the desert, offered to any stranger who did not belong to a hostile tribe, had been transferred to the whole house of Islam.'

And of course in Islam there is no 'colour bar.' The worship of *Allah* makes all men equal.

Perhaps the most optimistic view of human nature is taken by Confucianism, though diluted with Chinese common sense.

> 'All men are good at birth,
> But not many remain so to the end.'

'It is in virtue of its innate feelings that human nature may be considered good,' observed Mencius, saying also that human nature is disposed towards goodness as water flows downwards. Confucianism leaves the supernatural on one side, stressing the importance, however, of instruction and moral effort. In general Confucianism may be regarded as a religion for gentlemen, for the civilized; and of course the Chinese were civilized when Western barbarians were running about in woad. The trouble is that the Westerners have corrupted the Chinese; who have learned, only too well, our bad habits.

Dr. Hilliard, in discovering good points in other religions, does not depreciate Christianity; nor is he pleading for anything in the way of a mixture of religions. He sees that a religion has a genius of its own. Nevertheless, as there were Christians before Christ, so there are truth-seekers and truth-finders elsewhere than in the Ark of the Church. No one can read this admirable book without increasing his hopes for humanity. Religion is doubtless a mixed magnitude, but without it we should soon lose the modest amount of humanity that we possess. The book is low-priced, and should be bought, yet does display a notable feature in actual practice, *i.e.* a genuine brotherhood of believers, beyond anything that Hinduism, or even Christianity (as it now is) can show. Dr. Hilliard quotes Professor L. E. Browne:
read, and pondered. A.B.

CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editor of *The Modern Churchman*

CONVERSATION PIECE (*M.C.*, APRIL, 1948)

SIR,

J.C.H. has brightened and illuminated many subjects, but I must question his review of Dr. Worsley's *Is there an Honest God?*

Lake's 'totality of values' cannot thus be flicked aside: '. . . about as tenable philosophically as a brick building under artillery fire.' J.C.H.'s alternative invited bombs: '. . . all values, unless they have their basis in a divine Mind . . .' For that the only tenable basis is faith: Schiller's 'forecasting prescience.' Philosophy cannot yet make it more than a desirable hypothesis.

J.C.H. reviewed Dr. Worsley's book as a philosophical essay: the Preface clearly calls it 'Conversations in quest of Reality in individual thought, in religion and in public justice.' A critic should judge what an author attempts, not what the critic thinks he ought to have attempted.

This rule refutes J.C.H.'s strictures on 'Canon Merry': 'if one could not make out a better case than the feeble Canon, one would go out of business.' The trouble is that so many feeble Canons have! Dr. Worsley invited controversy by producing, not philosophical concrete, but discussions which actually go on day by day at a certain level, thereby attempting something far harder (and braver) than J.C.H.'s review presupposes.

COLIN KING.

REPLY OF REV. J. C. HARDWICK

SIR,

The late Professor Lake's formula is an attractive one, but the trouble is that it can be no *honest* substitute for God; is not, in short, 'an honest God' at all. If I remember rightly, Lake himself suggested that the term 'God' might well be dropped. I agree with your correspondent that the dependence of absolute values upon an absolute Mind is no more, philosophically speaking, than an 'attractive hypothesis,' though there is a good deal to be said, and as some would hold, everything to be said, for it. That, however, is not the point; the point is that the God posited by this sort of 'hypothesis' *would* be an *honest* God, which Lake's God certainly is not, for the simple reason that he is not a God at all, but a substitute. Which Lake, being a highly intelligent person, saw clearly enough.

As for the good Canon Merry, there are, unfortunately, too many like him, but my point was that Dr. Worsley in introducing him made a bad choice, for so innocuous a creature could do nothing to strengthen or enliven his symposium. After all, the Anglican ministry is not wholly composed of people like that. Dr. Worsley's book, regarded not as a philosophic treatise, but as a readable conversation piece, ought to have included a tough exponent of traditional orthodoxy, who 'knew his stuff' and could have stood up to the amateur theologians who, to one reader at least, seemed far too sure of themselves.

YOUR REVIEWER.

'SPIRIT AND SPIRIT'

SIR,

In your March number, in the article which bears this title, Dr. Hunkin speaks of the difficulties which surround the question of the relation between mind and brain. It seems to me that what he says about the tendency of Natural science to reduce the totality of things to one coherent unity suggests that we may look for an answer to this vexed question in the Aristotelian and Thomistic theory of the essential unity of mind and body rather than in a mechanical interaction which would violate the principle of the conservation of energy. St. Thomas expresses this unity in his saying: 'Idem ipse homo est qui percipit se intelligere et sentire.' Now Dr. Hunkin suggests that the 'objectivity of objects' may arise 'from their subsisting in the mind of some Eternal Spirit.' If this is true of ordinary matter is it not even more likely to be true of that mysterious kind of matter which we call 'living'? But if I really do possess a mind why is its every action apparently paralleled by the brain? It is precisely here that St. Thomas helps us. In a living organism we cannot properly separate the material and immaterial. The brain behaves as it does because it is not merely matter, but living matter—matter given its special character by union with a mind. With material instruments we can only perceive the material results of the mind-brain combination, just as with similar instruments we can only perceive the material results produced by the mind of the Eternal Spirit. But surely it is as easy to be convinced that the activities of a human brain necessarily result from its union with an immaterial mind as to be convinced of the essential dependence of matter on 'the mind of some Eternal Spirit'?

I conclude with a quotation from Eddington's *Nature of the Physical World* which is I think exactly what Scholastic Philosophy and Dr. Hunkin say.

> 'I do not believe that the activity of matter at a certain point of the brain stimulates an activity of mind: my view is that the activity of matter here is a metrical description of certain aspects of the activity of mind.' (p. 268.)

The technical scholastic expression is that the soul (*i.e.* the mind) is the form of the body. It is impossible to consider them separately in a living organism.

G. M. GIBBINS.

PROCREATION AND CONTRACEPTIVES

SIR,

Your comment, in 'Signs of the Times,' on Procreation and Contraceptives seems to me, if I may say so, to pay too little attention to the most important aspect of the recent judicial decision.

With your view as to the lawfulness of the use of contraceptives I am wholly in agreement, and equally so with the opinion that marriage may

rightly be entered upon by both parties for the sake of 'the mutual society, help and comfort that the one ought to have of the other' and not for the purpose of procreation. But neither of these opinions really goes to the heart of the matter. The question is whether the refusal of procreation is consistent with the matrimonial contract *when it is purely one-sided, and was not announced beforehand.*

There are many men who desire children for reasons which no one has the right to call selfish. The heir apparent to a monarchy may reasonably wish to have legitimate offspring to succeed him in the royal line, and a similar statement may be made of most bearers of historic titles and indeed of many men who value their ancestral heritage. Such a man thinks of matrimony as the normal means of perpetuating his name and family, and if after marriage he finds himself united to a wife who refuses to bear children the injustice of his position cannot be disposed of by the statement, however true in itself, that the use of contraceptives is unobjectionable.

Apparently, his position is one of complete helplessness, and through no fault of his own his ancestral line must come to an end by the deliberate decision of his wife which *ex hypothesi* is not based on grounds of either health or economics. And it is to be noted that, whatever views we may hold on the general subject of divorce, in this case the institution of divorce may not help him. His wife may give no ground for his divorcing her, and even if he gives her ground for divorcing him she may refuse to do so. It is not a question of whether he will ignore social conventions and co-habit with another woman, for even if he does so he will still have no legitimate offspring to succeed him. He is, as I have said, in respect of his desire to perpetuate his line, even (it may be) his royal line, completely helpless—unless it is a possible solution that he must use force to compel his wife to his will.

Of course it may be answered that it is possible for every man and woman who desires children to ask the proposed partner before marriage whether she or he is willing to have them; and it may be that in the future this will become the common practice as a result of the recent decision. But it has not been so in the past; it has been customary to take it for granted; and we are not entitled to say that anyone who has hitherto not taken this precaution has been guilty of neglect, and so must be considered personally to blame for the position in which he or she is placed afterwards.

To regard the question here raised as merely one about the propriety of the use of contraceptives, or as furnishing one more illustration of the attitude of the Roman Catholic Church to marriage, is obviously inadequate. The House of Lords has decided that in the Baxter case there was nothing to justify a decree of nullity, and apparently there is also no ground for divorce unless the divorce laws are altered. But if any grounds at all are approved for divorce, I submit that there cannot be any other so completely justified as this one, and I hope that you will say so.

C. F. Russell.

Crosby Lodge, Blundellsands.
April 2nd, 1948.

[We thank our correspondent for the important point stressed in his letter and we are in entire agreement with him.—Ed., *M.C.*]

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Contents for October, 1948

THE CINDERELLA OF THE VALUES	Dr. L. P. Jacks
BY WHAT AUTHORITY?	Hamilton Fyfe
THE THREAT TO ACADEMIC FREEDOM	Reginald Lennard
PASCAL'S MEDITATIONS ON SOCIETY	Dr. W. Stark
PASCAL AND KIERKEGAARD	The Rev. J. M. Lloyd Thomas
JESUS OR PAUL?	Ray Knight
THE AUTHENTICITY OF THE PAULINE EPISTLES	William C. Wake
REVELATION AND REASON	Professor H. D. Lewis
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CONTENTS

PAGE

THE OXFORD CONFERENCE OF MODERN CHURCHMEN - 153
The Editor

THE NECESSITY FOR A CHRISTIAN MODERNISM - - - 156
Sir Henry Self, K.C.B., B.D.

THE CAUSES OF CHRISTIAN MODERNISM - - - - 171
Professor S. A. Cook

MODERNISM TRUE AND FALSE - - - - - - - 186
Very Rev. W. R. Inge, D.D., K.C.V.O.

THE FAITH OF A MODERNIST LAYMAN - - - - - 199
R. B. Henderson, M.A., B.D.

MODERN SCIENCE AND CHRISTIAN MODERNISM - - 208
Martin Davidson, D.Sc., F.R.A.S.

CHRISTIAN MODERNISM AND BARTHIANISM - - - 218
J. S. Boys Smith

CHRISTIAN MODERNISM AND EDUCATION - - - - 226
Sir Cyril Norwood

CHRISTIAN MODERNISM AND EDUCATION - - - - 234
Alice Ashley, M.A.

CHRISTIAN MODERNISM IN PASTORAL WORK - - - 240
F. E. Compton, M.A., B.Sc.

WORLD EVANGELISM AND CHRISTIAN MODERNISM - - 247
A. C. Bouquet, D.D.

CHRISTIAN MODERNISM AND CHURCH UNITY - - - 259
D. E. H. Whiteley, M.A.

CONTENTS—continued

PSYCHO-THERAPY AND THE EXPERIENCE OF CONVERSION 267
E. Graham Howe, M.B., B.S., D.P.M.

HASTINGS RASHDALL - - - - - - - - - 281
D. L. Scott, M.A.

BURNETT HILLMAN STREETER - - - - - - - 294
J. S. Bezzant, B.D., M.A.

CHRISTIAN MODERNISM AND PHILOSOPHICAL THEOLOGY 311
W. Richardson, M.A.

THE CHARTER OF CHRISTIAN MODERNISM - - - - 320
Rt. Rev. J. W. Hunkin, D.D., M.C.

VIA VERITAS VITA - - - - - - - - - - 325
Ven. W. M. Browne, M.A.

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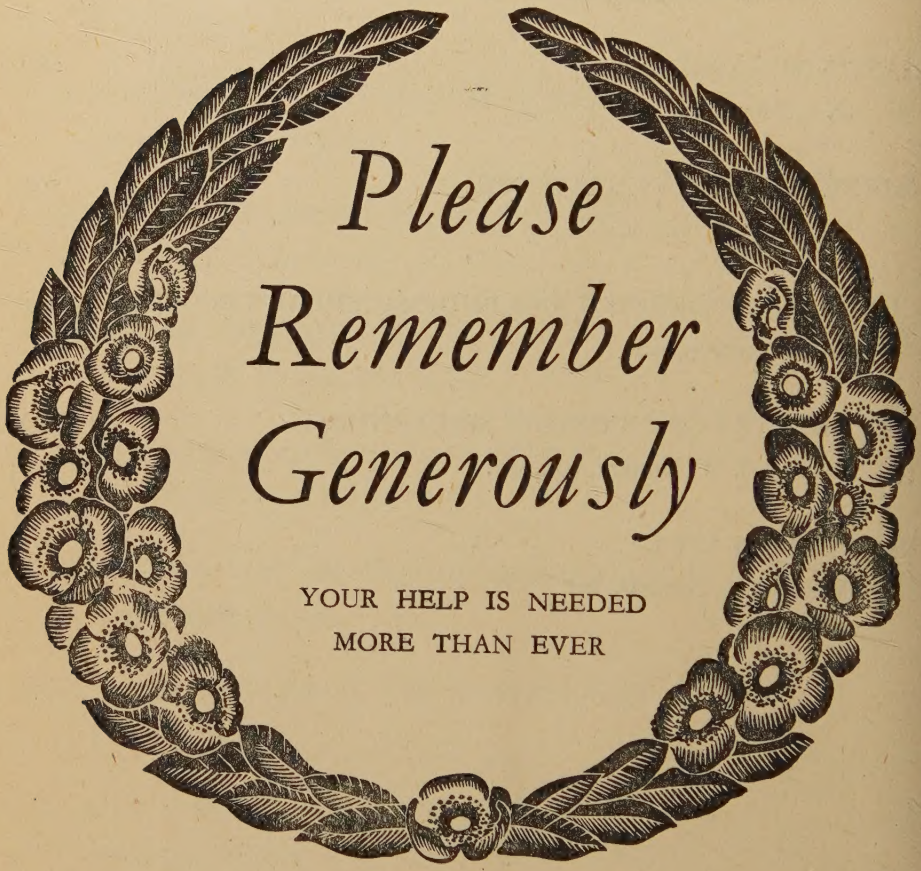

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